MR. PENDLETON'S
CUP

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MR. PENDLETON'S CUP.

A STORY FOR BOYS.

BY

GLANCE GAYLORD,

AUTHOR OF "CULM ROCK," "GILBERT STARR," ETC.

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Mr. Pendleton's Cup.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANTIQUARY.

MR. PENDLETON was an antiquary. He delighted in everything odd and ancient. Yes, *everything!* — no matter whether it came from home or abroad — so long as it savored of antiquity it was dear unto his heart. Now the old gentleman was nearing sixty, and began to look quite gray and ancient himself; indeed, he looked much older than most gentlemen of his age, and this was the reason: All his life-time

he had shut himself up among his books and relics, and there had lived like a hermit. No one ever came to see him, unless it were a few old gentlemen of like tastes, and then they were never merry or sociable, but sat all day long in the cabinet shaking their wise heads over some newly-discovered treasures, and muttering to each other in whispers. He had not a little friend in the world to make merry with; he never smiled or chatted, and so the wrinkles in his face drew themselves down into long, sober lines, that gave his features a grave, stern aspect. I dare say that if you had seen him, you would have thought him a very cross-looking old gentleman.

Sometimes, in the dim, dim years that had flown, Mr. Pendleton had had a little boy of his own, and oh, what a precious little fellow he was! Bright eyes, sunny curls, quick, merry little ways that wound themselves wonderfully around the father's heart; but one day

Death carried away the mother and little boy, and left the father all alone. Then it was that he shut himself up in the solitude of his great house, and grew to be a gray-headed, wrinkled, stern old man, — very, very different, I fancy, than he would have been had that little boy lived to brighten his father's days.

But in looking at the old gentleman you would never suspect that any such thing had ever occurred in his life-time. He had very keen black eyes, that looked sharply out from under a fringe of gray eye-brows; and as they had become somewhat dim in deciphering old MSS., and puzzling over old script, he wore a pair of great silver-rimmed spectacles, through which he peered when he spoke, and looked very wise and learned. He kept an old housekeeper, who had grown gray in his service, and who was quite as grave and silent a personage as her master. In fact, she had become so while in his employ, for with no one

to talk to, and no one for company, how could she help it? I dare say she would once have liked a cheerful chat and a smile as well as any one; but moving so long in the same silent, monotonous round of duties, she had grown to dislike a laugh and cheery talk most heartily. She kept a great cat, who stalked about with his mistress everywhere she went — even to the post-office, where she was obliged to go daily after the old gentleman's letters and papers. And thus these two elderly people lived in this great, silent house; a life which we — who love cheerfulness, and sunshine, and bright companions — would be apt to think was most cheerless and desolate. But they did not find it so.

Now all these long, long years, Mr. Pendleton had been collecting and hoarding his treasures. Very poor treasures some people would have thought them, but to the antiquary they were precious indeed! They filled four

spacious rooms, and such strange and wonderful sights these rooms presented! If I were to write all day, I don't suppose I could tell you half the queer things there were in them. Through the dim light one might perceive tier after tier of shelves which reached from floor to ceiling, and all were laden with things strange and curious. In all the angles, and over the doors and windows, hung dark and time-stained paintings; clumps of dusty old armor; swords that were rusty and had lost their glitter; and spears and lances that were hundreds of years old. So long had these relics lain here, and so many had he accumulated, that Mr. Pendleton himself could not tell all these shelves contained; for year after year he added to his stores, till they fairly trembled and bent under their weight, and the memory of no man was great enough to contain them. And oh, the dust that had settled over all! for the old housekeeper was not allowed to disturb

even the smallest of these treasures; and so the dark dust gathered, and the spiders wove webs in the corners to their hearts' content, and altogether these rooms were so dirty and dingy, that no one but a genuine antiquary could have tolerated them. But Mr. Pendleton loved dust — it savored of age and antiquity — and so his heart's serenity was disturbed not a whit. His somber figure moved about in these dim rooms quite in its element. And, if you care at all about it, you shall know what some of this antiquary's treasures were.

On these shelves, thick with dust, lay the most beautiful Indian agates, — spotted and veined with crimson and azure, and shot through with golden threads; lumps of virgin gold from far-off mines; beautiful pink-lipped shells, and mother-of-pearl; curiously carved boxes of some fragrant Eastern wood; strings of yellowish pearls that had once lain on a princess's neck, and precious gems that gleamed from out their dusty velvet bed.

There were a whole row of dried, wizen-faced Egyptian mummies, and a box of papyrus rolls too old and withered to be deciphered. Ancient pottery — enough to stock a small crockery-store, and a little fortune in old coins and medals. Indian arrows and implements were there in abundance, with gay head-dresses and mantles of woven feathers. A stuffed owl was perched on an ancient hemlet, and overlooked the whole with eyes that fairly rivaled Mr. Pendleton's for wise expression, and on the floor a long-legged crane balanced himself on a pedestal. Then there were old wigs, rare laces, jewelled combs, ancient costumes, velvet skull-caps, a very old harpsichord, and in the darkest corner stood the full armor of a knight, with arm out-stretched, as if he yet grasped the battle-axe and were going to rush at you. And as for such things as crystal cups, richly cut old decanters, deeply-wrought vases and marbles, the half is not to be told. From every

clime, from every nation, from all grades of civilization, had the old gentleman gathered his valuables, and here they were buried in the dust and silence. I will only say more that a king's snuff-box was there, also the skull of a conqueror, and the rouge-box of a famous beauty.

The only cheerful, cosey spot in the whole house — aside from the spotless little kitchen where the old house-keeper presided — was by a sunny window in the cabinet, where the old gentleman kept his books, and received his brother-antiquarians. Here, for a wonder, was one clear, clean-paned window, and as there was no curtain, the sunbeams were at full liberty to steal in and brighten everything with their ruddy gold. And they did their work so lavishly that the room was really pleasant. Here were huge, leather-covered volumes ranged around the wall, and the old gentleman handled them quite often enough to keep them

free of dust. Here, by the window-seat, was his easy-chair, and before it stood a writing-table heaped up with tumbled papers, old letters, and dingy manuscripts. So full had it become, that there was hardly room for pen and ink-bottle. And on the wall, back of the easy-chair, hung his hat and cloak, — a cloak that you would have thought he must have rummaged out of some old garret, at least — it was so quaint and old-fashioned. But so long had the old gentleman lived his hermit-like life, that whenever he had occasion to go abroad — which was very rarely — he was entirely unconscious of the smiles which his queerly-dressed figure provoked. In the dingy and old-fashioned rooms where he dwelt, such a dress was appropriate enough, but in the gay, bustling, fashionably-attired street-crowd, ah, that was entirely a different matter.

The old gentleman detested noise, and bustle, and confusion most heartily, and fortunate-

ly for him his house fronted on one of the quietest streets in Darnleigh. The lumbering omnibuses hardly ever entered the street; there were but very few children to romp and shout, and of a summer afternoon there were generally no greater disturbance than the soft cooing of the doves that flew down from the house-tops to seek for food on the pavements.

And on this gray January afternoon, when we shall first see the old antiquary, the street was very peaceful and quiet. The snow lay in a thin covering over the cobble-stones—not enough of it for sleighing, and the air was too chill and cold for it to melt. The sun had been hidden in thick snow-clouds since noon, and people had all deserted the street.

Mr. Pendleton sat in his easy-chair before the window, with a great leather-covered volume open before him. It was a new acquisition, and I don't think he had once raised his eyes from the yellow, time-stained pages, since

he sat down after snatching a few hasty mouthfuls of dinner. He had not noticed the thick gray clouds which threatened snow, nor that the street was deserted. Page after page was turned — the afternoon waned — and had not his spectacles slid down upon his nose, he would very likely have forgotten himself entirely till darkness shut out the words before him.

But as he re-adjusted his spectacles, some sense of the stillness without touched him, and he looked up. Gray, and chilly, and silent! The doves were picking about the snow, and now and then their soft cooing floated up to his ears. The old man started, looked up at the sky and down at the doves, — rubbed his forehead a little, and then, pushing up through all the dry and weighty knowledge, with which his head was crammed, struggled one little memory. Thirty-four long years ago, that very day, his little boy had died.

Just such a January day it was, he remembered, that the little soul flew away, — gray, and raw, and chilly. Something very like a sigh escaped his lips, and having fixed his spectacles to suit him he turned to the great volume again, but only to find that it had grown suddenly distasteful.

"Ah me," he muttered, pushing the book back among his papers, — "I'm growing old. I can't read one afternoon, I find, without making me nervous. I'll look out the window a little while. It looks quiet enough to soothe any one."

So he turned him about in his easy-chair, and with his head resting on his hands gazed out. The doves were fluttering about from one spot to another, finding but a scanty feast among the cobble-stones. Just such speckled doves as these, he remembered, his little boy used to feed, — sitting in that very window-seat, and throwing the white bread-crumbs

down on to the stones below. Ah, what a long, long time ago it was! yet here were the same gray and brown and white and ash-colored creatures, hopping about as pertly, and cooing as softly as his Willie's had done.

"And there's no one to feed them now, since Willie went away!" he muttered, forgetting all the long years that had flown since the sunny-haired boy sat in the window-seat. "I'll go and feed them myself," said he, getting up from his chair; "they're hungry, poor things! I wonder how I came to forget them," and he shuffled off down to the kitchen after some bread crumbs, where I'll warrant you he had not been before in many a year.

Old Kate, the housekeeper, had gone out; he remembered, after he got down there, that he had seen her start for the post-office. But after much searching in cup-boards and closets, he found a loaf of bread, and armed with a sharp knife went back to his seat. The doves

were still picking under the window. Softly he raised the great sash and leaned out.

"Maybe they'll think it's Willie," he said softly, as he let fall a shower of crumbs, and laughed a bit contentedly to see how the half-famished birds crowded around. What a strange picture he made! Had there been any passers-by they would doubtless have pronounced him crazy at once. Aged and venerable he looked, framed in by the dark window sashes, with his white beard sweeping the ledge, and his wrinkled hands eagerly whittling fragments off the big loaf under his arm, while he laughed with almost childish glee to see the soft-feathered things scurry about. Had his brother-antiquarians seen him at that moment, they would not have recognized him. They supposed him the grimest of all mortals. But, you know, they knew nothing about his little boy.

Just at that instant a vision of sunny curls,

bright eyes, and sweet little mouth, rose up before him — just as if the doves had startled it — and uttering a cry the old man drew back, thrust down the window hurriedly, and dropping his loaf and knife sank back in his chair with a shiver.

"O my little boy!" he said, "what did you come back for! To see poor old papa?"

But there was no answer; the vision — if vision there had been — had fled, and there was only the wide stretch of gray sky to be seen, and the clamor of the doves below to be heard.

CHAPTER II.

A JOURNEY AFTER A CUP.

WITH hand pressed over his dim old eyes, he sat motionless till a door, somewhere down in the housekeeper's dominion, slammed violently together. Doubtless a current of air had drawn it to, for Mr. Pendleton's doors were not apt to slam by any human agency. Presently old Kate's footsteps were heard on the stairs, and pushing open the cabinet-door she entered with the old gentleman's mail. She moved noiselessly across the floor and placed it upon the writing-table, and in so doing spied the loaf and knife upon the floor. For an instant her eyes opened very wide with

wonder, then she stooped, picked up the bread, gathered up the crumbs carefully in her hand, and hiding them under her apron went out as noiselessly as she entered.

After a little time Mr. Pendleton looked up with a long sigh — perceived that the housekeeper had withdrawn — and presently turned to look at his mail. Only one paper and one letter. Yet the letter was large enough for two, and was sealed with a great red old-fashioned stamp. The old gentleman's eye brightened as he looked upon it. "Ahem," said he; "here is business, I suspect!" The tenderness faded out of his face, and he was once more the stern, grave old antiquarian. Hurriedly he broke the seal, and then to his dismay found that his spectacles were not upon his nose. Where could they be? He peered under the writing-table, and between the legs of his easy-chair, but no spectacles were there. He tumbled over all the books and papers upon

his desk, but to no purpose. Then he lost patience and shuffled down to the kitchen in a great hurry, where old Kate was making her tea, and there overhauled her neat cupboards and closets, working dire confusion within. And then he suddenly bethought himself of the window-seat and the doves, and hurrying around the house, presently found his spectacles lying safe and sound upon the stones where they had fallen when he leaned out to scatter crumbs. Safely seating them once more upon his nose, he hurried back to the comfort of his easy-chair, and there re-opened his letter. And this was what it contained: —

"WAYNETHORPE, JANUARY 20th.

Respected Sir:

I have some delightful news for you. I should have communicated it earlier, but other business prevented. Morton has a most wonderful cup — excelling everything which I have

seen in that line these twenty years — and you know I have seen some cups in that time. This is of silver — antique pattern — and is at least two hundred and twenty-five years old. It is perfectly wonderful. The price is fabulous, and beyond my means, but not beyond yours I am aware; and I want you to secure it. To do this you will be obliged to come on and take it at once, as it will pass out of Morton's hands in a week or so. Don't delay a moment after getting this note, as a few hours may be fatal to your success. Hope you are well, and shall look for you on the next train. I'll be at the depot, and we'll go to Morton's at once and secure it.

Yours in great haste,

J. HARVEY."

To Mr. Jno. Pendleton.

Now did the old gentleman's eyes fairly shine with joy! He folded up the letter and

carefully bestowed it in his waiscoat pocket. Then he rang the bell, and old Kate made her appearance as soon as her aged feet could climb the stairs. "Well, mistress Kate," said he briskly, "my overcoat and slippers if you please! — but stay — I mean — did I say overcoat? I know not how that word crept into my head! I mean my cloak and boots. Let them come quickly I pray you." Now the cloak hung directly over the old gentleman's head, and the boots lay under his writing-table. But old Kate was accustomed to these freaks of absent-mindedness on the part of her master, and gravely took down the quaint cloak, and brought him his boots. Then she stood with folded hand waiting for further orders. On went the boots in a great hurry, the cloak was pulled on, down came the hat from its peg, and Mr. Pendleton was ready! Then: —

"Will you have tea, sir?" came from the housekeeper's prim lips.

"Tea? no! I can wait for no tea. I've the cars to catch. Where's my walking-stick? Ah—and now I bethink me I shall want a change of raiment I think. Pray see to it at once, mistress Kate, and pack the black valise! And then — but stay, pray look at the time of day, will you not?"

The housekeeper went into the hall, and presently returned to say that it was precisely five o'clock. Now Mr. Pendleton had travelled enough to know that the last train left Darnleigh at four. His letter had arrived an hour too late!

"Ah me!" he exclaimed soberly, "I'm an hour too late. Where has the afternoon gone? Well, mistress Kate, I shall not need the black valise at all to-night, but let it be ready early in the morning. I go to Waynethorpe on the first train. Tea, did you say? Yes! let me have it directly. This is to be a busy evening

Light the lamp, good Kate! I must be at work."

Off came the cloak and hat, and were thrown into a chair. The old housekeeper made it a standing rule to execute his last orders first, so that by the time he had divested himself of his boots, the solitary lamp was lit and placed upon the writing-table where there was barely room for it to stand. And here the old gentleman sat himself down to pore over his books and papers, and when the housekeeper came in with the tea-tray, eating and drinking was the very thing fartherest from his mind. So it stood and cooled, and when the evening was far advanced and he chanced to remember that he had had nothing to eat since noon, it was not fit to taste of.

Again old Kate was obliged to make her appearance with another tray of food, and if she had not been a patient body — entirely used

to her master's freaks and whims — you see there would have been sad fretting and muttering on her part.

In these dark and silent hours the snow-flakes began to sail slowly down, rustling against the pane and peering in at the old man as he studied. The lamp-light threw a great grotesque shadow of him on the wall — a shadow that flickered and bobbed about in a wonderful manner as the old gentleman turned his head from side to side. And here he studied and wrote and worked among his papers till a very late hour, and then took his way to bed.

The morning dawned snowy and gray. Old Kate was up betimes, and packed her master's valise as he had desired — placed it by the legs of his easy-chair, leaned his cane across the arm, brought out his boots from under the book-case, where he had thrown them, and put the old cloak and hat where he could not fail to see them. Then she went to

get breakfast. Now the old gentleman had worked so late the previous night that when morning broke he was very tired and sleepy. There was, moreover a dismal pain in his back from the effects of his many journeys up and down stairs the afternoon before. So he lay and dozed away the minutes till the clock in the hall tinkled eight.

"Eight o'clock!" he exclaimed, with a little cry of dismay; "and the train starts at half-past, if I remember rightly. I've not a minute to spare!" and out of bed he got in a great hurry, with many a groan over the stitch in his back, and thrust on his clothes in a very disorderly manner. Before his toilet was half through, the housekeeper rapped at his door to say that breakfast was ready and waiting.

"Yes! yes! my good Kate!" said he; "I will be there as soon as ever I can. Pray have the black valise ready, for I've no time to lose."

And with that he brushed his gray locks a trifle, tied a black neckerchief around his throat, and rushed out into the cabinet. There he found that the most excellent Kate had made everything ready for his hand, for which he mentally thanked her again and again; and having donned his travelling garments hurried away to snatch a few mouthfuls of breakfast. Fancy the queer picture he made as he sat at the little oaken table all wrapped and muffled in the great cloak, with a quaint hat set upon his bushy gray locks, taking alternate swallows of coffee and egg! And by his side leaned the ivory-headed cane, and under his feet was the black valise.

You would have thought him some ancient traveller who had barely time to take his dinner before the stage started, instead of a respectable old gentleman who was eating breakfast in his own house. But not much time or

thought had he for breakfast, and presently pushed back his chair exclaiming—

"Now I am ready! Mind the house, good Kate, and I shall be back before many days. Good—" Another minute Mr. Pendleton would have been out in the snow, but the housekeeper stopped him short by observing gravely—"The snow is over your slippers, sir."

He had forgotten to put on his boots! but old Kate's keen eyes had noticed the defect in time to save the worthy man a pair of wet feet. Having exchanged his slippers for the forgotten boots, he hurried off through the falling snow toward the depot. As fast as his feet and cane could urge him along did he go—attracting the wondering gaze of every one who chanced to be in the streets. The cab-men stared and grinned, the boot-blacks laughed aloud, and the ladies drew themselves

one side and fancied him a crazy man, and altogether our poor antiquary would have had a very unpleasant walk had not his mind been so abstracted by other thoughts, that he was entirely unconscious of the various expressions which his appearance excited. As he entered the depot the bell rang, and the engine whistled. "All aboard!" shouted the conductor, — the train started — and poor Mr. Pendleton had only just time to grasp the step-rail and tumble aboard in a manner that caused a brake-man to exclaim sharply — "Old man, you'll get killed some of these days!" But it is doubtful whether he heard this warning, and if he did he was not greatly disturbed, and was soon seated comfortably with his valise and cane safe beside him.

It was a day's journey to Waynethorpe. Fortunately for the old gentleman there were no changes of cars. For half the day the road was over a low, level country, which the

snow had whitened and smoothed till it resembled one vast plain. At noon the train began to enter the hilly country, and at noon Mr. Pendleton looked up from his book — he could not afford to waste time in travelling he thought — and for the first time looked around him. The car was not very full, but about full enough for comfort and company. There were about a half-dozen men in military great-coats who occupied the forward end of the car, and who were very merry over their stories, and somewhat boisterous. Two little boys who seemed to be journeying alone occupied one seat, and they had been staring at the strangely-attired old gentleman with very wide-open eyes half the forenoon. A poorly and thinly dressed woman, with a baby in her arms, sat in the seat directly in front of him. Some elderly ladies, in the opposite seat, were eating lunch and taking side glances at him, secretly trembling lest he should be an escaped

lunatic who might take it into his crazy head to butcher them all.

Now at the sight of these ladies with their lunch, Mr. Pendleton suddenly found that he too was hungry. He took up his valise, wondering whether mistress Kate had had the forethought to pack him anything in the shape of luncheon. Yes, the first thing which met his eyes was a nice paper of sandwiches. Not a very nice place for sandwiches in a valise, one would think, but good Kate knew full well that her master would as lief carry them there as anywhere; and ten to one he would not think of them at all till he got back. But for once the old gentleman found sandwiches almost as acceptable as books, and munched them with grateful thoughts towards his house-keeper. One by one, people began to eat their luncheons; the little boys displayed a basket of cookies and rosy apples; the officers made merry over a bottle of wine; but the poor

woman with a baby was quite dinnerless. Suddenly a figure in a great cloak overshadowed her, and there in her lap lay two nice, fresh-looking sandwiches. Who put them there? Somebody who did not wish for thanks, it was quite evident; and the hungry woman ate them gratefully, and did not quite dare to look behind her.

Now into the hilly country rushed the train, — rumbling over tumbling streams, and shooting through the dim and white silver forests. Mr. Pendleton speedily lost himself in the contents of his book, and knew nothing of the lapse of time till the speed of the train was slackened, and the engine whistled long and shrilly, and then they trundled slowly into Waynethorpe.

The storm was over, and the snow-clouds were breaking in the West to disclose bright patches of soft blue where the sunbeams were struggling through. Mr. Pendleton made his way through the bustling crowd at the station

as quick as possible, after finding that his friend was not there. Thinking that that gentleman had given up his arrival, and fearing lest he should lose the cup, our old gentleman at once took a cab to Morton's — a curiosity-shop to which he was no stranger. There he found the ancient cup, and purchased it at once. It quite surpassed his expectations. He went into raptures over it. And storing it away in his valise he took his way to the house of his friend, just as the sun was setting and reddening all the sky, and tipping the church-steeples with gold. And as he goes shuffling up the side-walk, we must be content to lose sight of him for a little while.

CHAPTER III.

TWO FRIENDS.

WAYNETHORPE High school was out, and the pupils were running homeward over the snowy side-walks, laughing and shouting as all school-children do when let loose from study. It was *so* pleasant to see the white spotless raiment of snow over everything, and to hear the sleigh-bells jingle in the streets! And all the gray, sombre clouds were breaking away and floating off in soft, vapory masses, and the long-hidden sun threatened to burst through at any moment.

The boys were jubilant, and snow-balled

each other to their heart's content. One by one, however, their numbers lessened as one after another reached their homes, till there were only two of all the large number left. And between these two lads who were walking so briskly down the street, how could there be a greater contrast?

One of them had a ruddy, merry face that was forever dimpling with the smiles which always hovered there; he had frank, sparkling blue eyes, and on his curly hair sat a warm fur cap that was perpetually bobbing about with the restless turnings of the owner's head, while his soft, thick garments showed plainly that Harry Thorpe was a rich man's son.

Poverty was stamped on the very face of his companion. It was thin and pinched, and without a trace of healthy, ruddy color. His eyes, too, had a way of looking very sad at times, and as for dimples in his cheeks — why, no one ever knew such a thing happen to Joe

Gray! His jacket was patched, and out of the elbows at that, and not another boy in the High school wore such miserable pants, and as for Joe's hat it was a poor dingy, faded, battered thing. But, strange as you may think it, these two boys were the truest of friends. Harry knew quite well enough that under Joe's ragged jacket there beat a heart as warm and faithful as heart can beat; for hadn't Joe stood by him in all his school-troubles, and once, when he was in such deep, deep disgrace, didn't Joe plead with the teacher till his heart relented? Hadn't Joe's keen wits lifted him over the dreadful slough in the Algebra lesson time and time again? And then, aside from all that, the poor fellow was so wretchedly poor and friendless that Harry's warm heart could not but love and pity him; and Joe needed some one's love and pity badly enough, for the High school boys were decidedly unkind at times. And thus, in the course of the

Winter term which they had been acquainted, the two became such firm friends that they were rarely apart when out of the school-room, and as Joe's homeward way led the same as Harry's, they walked the long path together.

Now, as they stepped briskly along, Joe's face began to lengthen visibly. Harry's cheery whistle did not sound pleasant at all. It grated upon his feelings, and made him sadder-eyed than ever. And presently Harry himself stopped short, saying —

"Why, Joe Gray, what's the matter of you? You haven't spoke a word since we left the boys!"

"I know," said Joe faintly, "but — but you were whistling you know."

"Oh, Joe, that's just no reason at all! I whistle every night and you talk just the same. Now think of a better excuse than that!"

But Joe had no reason to invent an excuse

for his unwonted silence, for his trouble was not at all visionary. "Well," said he, in a slow and trembled tone, "the truth is, I've got to leave school!"

"O, Joe!"

Both were silent till Harry said —

"But you really don't mean it, Joe? You're only joking me!"

"No;" said the other, "I'm in earnest. Jumper told me this noon. He said —"

"Fudge!" interrupted the rich man's boy, "Jumper has told you so a dozen times, or more. I wouldn't mind what he says! He'll get over his stingy fit in a day or two."

"No, he's really in earnest now. He's lost some money lately, and can't afford to send me to school another day. He said I was to take my books Friday night and not go any more."

At this his friend's merry face grew very sober too. "Oh, Joe," he exclaimed, "to leave school when it's three-quarters through,

and you almost to the very head of your class! Why, you can't and you mustn't!"

"I can, and I must," said Joe sorrowfully, and then they walked a long way down the pavement in silence.

High over their heads the leaden clouds had dissolved into bits of floating vapor that mottled the blue beyond it beautifully. And great golden bars of sunlight lay on the white patches of snow, and in the boughs of the spruces which ornamented the door-yard.

A little way farther in silence, and they reached Harry's gate. It opened into a pretty little yard with winding walks and leafless shrubbery, and tall, stately fir-trees which half hid the stone cottage beyond. "Now Joe," said he, "just stop a few minutes, and we'll talk about it. Perhaps we can think of something."

Joe shook his head hopelessly as his friend

stepped within the gate, but stopped nevertheless.

"Now," said the merchant's son, "if we only had money enough to finish this term, perhaps Jumper will send you himself the next. Haven't you *any* Joe?"

"Not a penny!" said Joe, with a faint smile.

"Oh dear!" said Harry, "that's bad. And I've spent every cent of my spending money for this quarter, too. What *did* I do it for? But you see, Joe, I got father to allow me half of it at Christmas, and the other half I've spent for things which did me no good at all. Oh, how I wish I hadn't!"

Joe shuffled his feet about in the snow — his thin cheeks getting very red — and when his friend was through, said:—

"I couldn't take your money if you had a mint of it, Harry."

"Couldn't take my money? Why, I'd like to know. But you would if I had it, for, do you see, I'd *make* you! How could you help yourself? I'd go and pay the bill, and then you would be in a fix. But you needn't worry, for I haven't got it. And what's more I don't know how I can get any!" Joe was silent, while Harry swung the gate to and fro very impatiently. The want of money was a sensation which he had never before experienced, and the feeling was not at all agreeable.

"You see," he continued confidentially, "that father is dreadful strict about my spending-money. He only let me draw it before it was due because I hadn't a cent for Christmas; but he told me then that he would never allow it again, and I know he wouldn't if I should tease him all night. Then, even if he *would*, I should hate to ask him, for it was my birth-day last Saturday, and he gave me the pony, and that great parcel of books. Oh, if I ever spend

my money so quick again I hope I may have to go without. It serves me right!"

"Well," said Joe, trying to look bright, "don't think any more about it. I'm sorry I told you."

"I *will* think about it, and you needn't be sorry you told me!" said Harry, in his impetuous way; "I'd like to know why I mayn't try to help you? I think Jumper is real mean and stingy, anyhow!"

"No! no!" said Joe quickly, "you mustn't call him that! Jumper is poor and has got five children; and I'm not the least bit related to him, either. So you see he's kind instead of stingy, for he isn't obliged to keep me one minute. I'd ought to be glad that he doesn't turn me adrift."

"Joe, you're a good fellow!" said his friend warmly; "I take back what I said about Jumper. But all this doesn't help us one bit. Oh dear! what a dreadful thing it is to be poor!"

Joe laughed in spite of himself, — it sounded so oddly to hear such words from that well-fed, well-dressed boy, who thought less of a dollar than he himself did of a penny.

"Oh, you may laugh, master Joe," cried his friend, "and I know what you're laughing at; but I'm just as poor as you at this moment. I've not one more penny than you; and all the difference is, you're not to blame for it, while *I* am. I might have had enough and to spare. But all this talking don't help us one bit, as I said before. There isn't a plan in my head. Help me, Joe!"

But Joe was moving slowly away, saying:—

"I guess it's time for me to go. Mrs. Jumper will have supper ready."

"Pshaw!" cried Harry, "that's only one of your miserable excuses, Joe Gray! Come back, or I'll never forgive you."

Thus importuned, Joe paced slowly back.

"Why," continued the merchant's son, "do

you think I'd let you leave school, Joe? and at the very time when you're getting on so finely, and going ahead of us all? No sir! I'll pawn my watch first."

"Oh, Harry!" said Joe, with a great sigh of reproach.

"Yes sir! I'll pawn my watch, and then next quarter I can redeem it easy enough with my spending money. O, I wonder I didn't think of it before!" and Harry laughed a little with delight at the good promise of this plan.

At this Joe's face was something to look at. He flushed very red, then grew pale, then said firmly —

"I won't stir an inch toward school if you do that way."

"Oh, you obstinate Joe!" cried his friend, indignantly, "I'll just let you go your own way, and see what'll become of you. No, I won't either! But really, Joe. don't be so

like a mule. What's the good? — and you make me dreadfully out of patience with you."

Joe leaned against the fence-rail, and looked upward. What peace and beauty was in the sky! Somewhere behind all these long rows of buildings the sun was setting. And though to the dwellers in the city its dying was invisible, all over the evening sky was such glory and richness and wealth of color, that one might easily fancy what lay hidden behind the dingy brick buildings. Soft bits of clouds of a rosy hue hovered everywhere, and here and there were little flecks of molten gold tinted at the edges with purple. Joe sighed a little as he looked at all this beauty, and knew not why. Harry drummed on the gate with his fingers, — keeping time to the tinkle of his sister's piano which floated faintly to their ears — and by-and-by he said slowly —

"If we could only get some of the gold that's floating over our heads! Then we'd

have enough for one school-term, I'm thinking. Say, Joe, why don't one person have money as well as another? Why isn't it divided up as it ought to be? I'm sure I wish you had some of ours."

These questions were quite too much for Joe, and he was silent. Why he lingered at the gate he had not the least idea. There was no use in it, he thought. There was no possible way in which he could keep his place at school, and he might as well give up now as anytime. What use was there in making a fuss about it? Yet, — oh, how Joe did love books and study! Harry didn't care a snap for books, and only studied because he was obliged to, — yet he had books by the hundred, and had got to go to college sometime, way off in the future; while Joe — Joe that loved them with such a passion — could never get a volume of his own, and now had got to leave school in the midst of his studies for the want

of a few paltry dollars. Oh, why *was* it so? he wondered. What should make such a great difference in their fortune? What right had Harry to so much more money than he? How came he to be born to rags and poverty, while Harry always wore the nicest and softest of clothes, the shiniest of boots, and knew not a want or discomfort from one long year to another?

Now these queries came suddenly into the boy's mind as he stood gazing upward, and perplexed him sorely. They made his great gray eyes look sadder than ever, and without finding an answer to one of these perplexing thoughts, he turned around to his friend, saying—

"I really must be going. Mrs. Jumper scolds sometimes, you know."

"Yes,—I know. Poor Joe! I'm just as sorry as I can be. Now don't go home look-

ing that way, for I shall keep thinking of you all the time."

Whereat Joe tried to smile, but could not. Now the winter twilight was short, and all the glory which hovered in the sky was fleeting. Quickly the brilliant hues faded and turned to gray, and long dusky shadows crept into the street. Joe had taken two or three homeward steps when he stopped short at the sight of a queer figure coming down the street.

"Do look!" cried Harry, under his breath; "did you ever see such a funny fellow?"

The figure which had attracted their attention was wrapped in a long antique cloak. Upon his head was a hat as ancient-looking as the cloak, and the slight evening breeze blew out his long gray locks behind. In his hands he carried a black valise, and, what looked very funny indeed, it was not fastened, but yawned wide-open and flapped back and forth with

every step which he took. Walking as fast as possible, and nervously swinging his cane, he made quite an odd-looking personage.

Now in the pavement, a few feet from the boys, there was a step. The street was thick with growing shadows, and as the old gentleman's eyes were somewhat dim it was no wonder that he failed to see it. He stumbled — came almost to the pavement — and dropped his cane and valise to save himself. Harry Thorpe but illy concealed his mirth at the sight of this tumble, and sad-hearted Joe could not refrain from smiling at the way in which the old hat bobbed about.

The old gentleman gathered himself and his possessions together with a little groan, and after pausing a moment to re-adjust his hat and cloak, hurried on into the dusk.

"A crazy man!" decided Harry as soon as he was out of hearing; "did you ever see such an odd fellow? Those clothes of his are

at least a hundred years old, — and the way that valise flapped! Why, I should think he'd lose everything out of it. It's no matter if he does, I suppose, seeing he can't have anything of much value. I really thought he was going to break his neck, Joe!"

CHAPTER IV.

FINDING A TREASURE.

HARDLY had the old gentleman passed out of sight in the evening dusk when a door in the stone cottage opened, and a voice called —

"Master Harry! your mother says you're to come in to tea directly, and not stand talking a minute longer to that —"

Here the door slammed and cut short the last word, but both the boys knew that the sentence was intended to be finished with "beggar."

Harry's face flushed hot with indignation, and looking anxiously at his friend he exclaimed :—

"Don't mind it, Joe, dear. 'Twas only Ellen, our hired girl, and I know mamma never said such a thing in her life. I'll pay Ellen for that."

But to Joe's sad heart this was another heavy weight. He was not a beggar. He *was* poor, but who was to blame? The same Heavenly Father who gave Harry his cottage, gave Joe his rags. And why had he done it? Ah, that was the question which was so troubling the poor boy's heart. He did not know where to find an answer! He turned away from the gate — sad and heavy-hearted. Warm-hearted Harry could not but notice his dejected air, and presently Joe felt two arms about his neck, and an eager voice whispered :—

"I don't care if you are poor, Joe! I love you ever and ever so much better than if you were rich. Now don't go home with such a face! Cheer up, and don't mind it a bit, Joe!"

At which Joe's heart gave a great throb of

gratitude, and releasing himself he said, "Good night," and once more started homeward. Now he had not gone half-a-dozen steps before he reached the little step in the pavement, and came near having such an accident as had befallen the old gentleman a few minutes before; for to his great surprise, as he stepped lightly off, his foot struck something which rolled and came near tripping him up.

"I wonder what ails that step?" he muttered; then, by the merest chance, his eyes happened to fall upon the pavement, and there they spied something which glittered.

"It's somebody's old tea-pot," he said to himself; "and I'll pick it up and throw it into the street before any one breaks their neck upon it."

So he stooped and picked it up, swung it back and forth a few times, preparatory to giving it a final throw into the street, and then

was suddenly astonished at its weight. A tin tea-pot was never so heavy as that!

Quickly he brought it before his eyes, and by the dim light that was left, the boy beheld a most wonderful and beautiful cup! Never had his eyes looked upon such a rich and splendid thing! Where could it have come from?

Filled with wonder and astonishment, he ran back to the gate, calling:—

"Harry! Harry! come back a minute!"

His friend had nearly reached the house, but stopped and came back at this appeal.

"Why, Joe, what's wanting?" he said in some astonishment as he reached the gate.

"Why," exclaimed Joe with trembling eagerness, — "the strangest thing! I stumbled over something by that step in the walk, and picked up — this!" and in his friend's hand he placed the cup.

Harry held it up before his eyes, and sur-

veyed it for a minute with breathless astonishment. His eyes were more accustomed than Joe's to seeing elegant articles, and was consequently quicker to gain some sense of its value.

"Why, Joe!" he said hurriedly,— "it's — solid — *silver!* — and worth — oh, I shouldn't dare guess how much!"

Both boys looked straight into each other's eyes, and were silent. Where could it have come from? Had it dropped from the skies? Then Joe said slowly —

"That old man must have lost it out of his valise when he stumbled over the step!"

"Pshaw," cried his friend, unbelievingly, — "it isn't at all likely that that old crazy man carries silver cups around in his carpet-bag, an open bag, too. Why, Joe, I never saw such a magnificent thing. It's an inch thick!"

"Yes, it is," said Joe, feeling the rim with his fingers.

"And it's all around with beautiful figures though it's so dark I can only feel them. Why, it's fit for an emperor. Who ever heard of such a thing being lost on a side-walk? It must have dropped from some other planet."

Joe drew a great long sigh.

"You're a lucky fellow!" exclaimed Harry; but still Joe was silent.

At last he said —

"I wonder where that old man went to? It must have fallen out of his valise, for there's been no one past since we stood here, — not a single person. It must be he that lost it, though he's a funny person to be carrying such a thing about."

"I don't believe it was he!" said Harry; "it's too ridiculous to think of a minute. No one less than a king could own it, I'm sure."

The boys surveyed the precious treasure, and again were silent. Both their hearts beat very high with excitement. And now into

Joe's heart there crept for the first time the first little thought of that which was afterward the cause of so much trouble to him — Temptation. He shivered and sighed, and kicked the snow about with his ragged boots. By-and-by, in a tone which was more interrogatory than affirmative, Harry said softly,—

"Oh, Joe, now you can go to school as long as you like!"

"Don't! don't!" cried poor Joe, piteously, — "don't say that, Harry."

"Why not, pray? What ails you, Joe?"

"Oh, — I'm thinking of something dreadful. You mustn't talk like that to me. You'll make me do something wicked," cried Joe, kicking the snow about fiercely.

"Wicked? Now, what are you saying, Joe Gray! and what are you kicking the snow about so for? Who owns this cup?"

"I don't know; I wish I did;" said Joe.

"Well," said his friend, "I don't believe

you ever will know. I don't believe it was that old man's, and if it isn't yours, whose is it? Your good fairy must have dropped it on the path for you, Joe!"

"My evil fairy, I think!" muttered the finder of this treasure.

"What, when it brings you such a good fortune? Oh, Joe! just think of the things which this splendid cup will buy you! It will send you to school a dozen times, and get you new clothes, and warm ones, too, and — and — oh, I can't begin to tell you half the things it will get!"

Now Harry Thorpe was not a bad boy at heart; he would no more have stolen a penny than he would have allowed his hand cut off. But now, when this great treasure had so suddenly fallen into his friend's possession, he spoke words which at another time he would not have uttered. Here was the means to send Joe to school as long as he liked, to give him

nice warm clothes, to buy him books, to drive away hunger and want and those pinched cheeks! Now they knew not the owner of this precious thing, and why was it not Joe's as much as any one's? Did not he need it more than any one else? Had not he found it? Was not what one found, one's own?

Perhaps the boys knew what was in each other's hearts, for they were silent a long time after the last remark of Harry's. Over their heads the bright, beautiful stars came out and looked down upon them. A fair young moon crept out of the white clouds to silver the snow, and roofs, and steeples a little. And it shone upon that wonderful cup in Harry's hand, and set its burnished sides a-glitter, and made the rich tracery glisten like frost-work. Oh, the temptation!

Presently the door of the stone cottage opened, and a soft voice said:—

"Harry, supper is over, and you must come in at once, if you wish any."

"Yes! yes! I'll come in a minute," said Harry; and then he turned to his friend, saying:—

"I've got to go in now, Joe, for certain. That was mamma. Now — now what are you going to do with — with the cup?"

"Oh dear!" sighed Joe; "I wish I'd never found it. What *can* I do with it?"

"Carry it home for to-night, or you can leave it with me," suggested his friend; "I shall not show it to any one, you may believe."

Joe hesitated a moment, then said:—

"Well, I guess I'll leave it with you. I've no place to put it, and Jumper might see it and take it away from me. Yes! I'll leave it with you to-night."

"Very well," said Harry; "it's jnst as you say," and hiding it under his coat, he gave his

friend a hurried good-night, and ran up the walk out of sight. Joe lingered at the gate till he saw the parlor-door swing wide — letting out a great glow of warm light, and a burst of sweet music — and Harry enter. And then he turned himself about to go to his own house. Oh, how dingy and cheerless it seemed in contrast with the one he was now leaving! No sweet-voiced mother, no gentle sister, no proud and kind-hearted father; no bright and cheerful rooms, no waiting supper-table, no joy and music for him.

Joe's heart ached sadly as he paced along the pavement. He resolutely determined to drive away all thoughts of the treasure that night, and to make no decision concerning it till the next morning, when his head would be quieter, and free from all those dreadful, troublesome thoughts, he hoped. All along his path fell broad bars of rosy light from windows where he could see pleasant family

groups around a cosey tea-table; or clusters of merry-faced, bright-eyed children playing games, or romping with good-natured papa. And at one house with long, low windows there was a children's party, and the little folks were dancing merrily to the time of a lively, cheery tune. The yellow gas-light lit up the great room in which they were gathered, and showed tall cases of books, walls hung with pictures, and vases of bright, summer-like flowers.

He lingered a minute on the pavement under the window to see how joyous and gleeful the children were, and how lightly they danced. It seemed to him that he had never seen so many merry, happy people before, — or if he had, he had never noticed them with such keen, wistful eyes as he did this night. Oh, I cannot tell you half the weight of loneliness and desolation that settled down in his heart as he passed down the long, long street,

and found such happiness for everybody but himself. It seemed to him that he, of all that great city-full of people, was the only friendless and desolate one. And his only pleasure, that of going to school, was to be taken from him in a few days, and then what should he do? Beg for Jumper? No! before he would do that he would keep the — "Pshaw!" he cried to himself, "I was not going to think of that miserable cup again to-night. Oh, how late it's getting to be! Jumper will certainly take my ears off."

He looked up into the sky, saw how the myriad stars had crept out to twinkle through the clouds, and soon the city bells chimed out seven. Then, partly because his toes were very cold, and partly because of the lateness of the hour, he broke into a run.

It was yet a long way to the Jumper abode Down — down — toward the lower end of the city, he pressed on. The handsome stone cot-

tages and great brick blocks were left behind, and dingy, dark old wooden tenements took their places. In some of them not a light was to be seen, save the faint flicker of moon-beams in the dirty, cob-webbed panes. Here and there, in the darkest alleys, a street-lamp glowed. Dreariness, misery, filthiness was stamped upon everything. The pure white snow had fallen upon the dirty walks, and over the filthy gutters, and hid for a little time their unseemliness.

Often upon the clear evening air rang the echo of a drunken song, or the shouts and cries of some noisy rioters; and once Joe's race was checked by a crowd of boisterous tipplers who were gathered on the side-walk quarrelling among themselves. As he came running along they seized upon him as an object for their drunken sport, and it was not until some minutes had passed, and he had received some rough knocks, that he managed to slip away.

But it was not the first time that Joe had fallen into the hands of such men, and not much disturbed thereby, he hurried on, and presently reached the Jumper residence. It was a little story-and-a half, tumble-down wooden building, squeezed in between two tall, dingy tenement houses. The residents of this disreputable neighborhood looked upon Mr. Jumper as rich, because he lived in a house of his own; but beyond this miserable shelter Jumper had nothing. He was addicted to taking a drop too much now and then, and but for this vice he would have been a moderately kind husband and father. As it was, the residence was often the scene of brawls between husband and wife, and in these squabbles, Jumper generally got the worst of it. He was a house-carpenter by trade, and when sober usually earned good wages.

Why he kept poor penniless Joe was something of a mystery The lad had not the

slightest claim upon his charity, and Jumper had found him wandering about the streets one chilly winter evening and brought him to his dwelling to "stay over night," as he said. That was several long years ago, and the carpenter had never quite the heart to turn him adrift, and so the boy grew up and got a term at school now and then when Jumper had the means.

Mrs. Jumper was a thin-faced, sharp-featured woman, whose back-hair always hung down her back, and who was not at all neat-looking. All the inmates of the tumble-down house stood in awe of her tongue, and Mr. Jumper stood somewhat in awe of her fists. She did not look upon poor Joe with very favorable eyes — partly because she considered him a burden upon their means, and partly because he was smarter than her own children. She always contrived to give him the hardest bits of crust, and the scantiest

allowance of soup; at which Joe did not grumble at all, but was thankful that he could get any.

Now as he reached home this star-lit night, he fancied the house to be unusually silent. The dim light of a candle flickered through the window, and showed that the Jumpers were at home, but very quiet for such a noisy family.

With many misgivings he lifted the latch, pushed open the crazy old door, and entered.

CHAPTER V.

JOE'S TEMPTATION.

MRS. JUMPER was in ill humor. Joe saw that as soon as he set foot within the room. Her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes rested upon him with no mild glance. Jumper sat in one corner looking very sullen, and the boy was instantly aware that they had been quarreling. Very likely the carpenter had come home drunk. Neither spoke at first, and Joe took off his hat and went to the old cracked stove to warm his numb toes. The five little Jumpers had gone to bed, and for once the boy had a comfortable seat without any crowding; but

unfortunately for him he trod upon the tip of old Tiger's tail as it protruded from under the stove, causing the dog to set up a most dolorous howl of pain and anger. Whereupon, Mrs. Jumper opened her vials of wrath.

"Joe Gray!" cried she, "what do you mean by stayin' out so late?" Joe was silent, that being his only shield of defence. "It's half-past seven, if it's a minnit! A pretty time to get home from school. But, thank Fortune, you won't have a chance to play truant much longer!—your school-going is about over, sir. Where've you been to? Come, speak out, or I'll make ye!"

"I stopped on the rood home with Harry Thorpe," Joe remarked mildly.

"I thought so!—I knew about where ye was. High times, Master Joe, your're having with that big boy's son! Don't care much about the Jumpers just now, do ye? Come, now, why don't ye leave us for good and all?"

"Wife," interposed the carpenter, "Joe hasn't—"

Mrs. Jumper faced about with a look which cut her husband short. Joe took advantage of this temporary lull in the tempest to enquire if there was any supper left for him.

"Well, now," observed the irate lady very ironically, "that's cool! Supper? I declare! Why, ha'nt ye been to supper? Of course ye have! You took supper with them smart Thorpes', and now you think you can git another out of us. But, my young friend, you can't come it."

To which poor Joe could only protest that he had not tasted a mouthful since noon. Mrs. Jumper shook her head incredulously, and affected not to believe one word of the story.

"Things have come to a pretty pass," said she sneeringly, "when a boy of your age 'll tell lies as fast as he can talk. What! do you 'spose you can make me think that ye're in

such smart company and haven't had an invite to supper? No, sir! I know gentle folk's manners better than that. Shame upon ye, Joe Gray, for being so greedy! — tryin' to take the very victuals out of the mouth of them that's starving, when you're living on the fat of the land!"

Now Mrs. Jumper knew perfectly well that Joe had not had a mouthful of supper; but being in very ill-humor, and finding that the carpenter was too sullen to be much disturbed by her scolding, she showered all her malice upon Joe's poor head. Very forlorn and miserable was the boy as he sat by the stove, and even Jumper's obtuse senses perceived something of this, for he made mysterious signs from his seat in the corner, and shook his fists behind Mrs. Jumper's back, and made faces at her, — all of which was to signify that Joe was not to mind her sharp tongue in the least. The fire roared in the old stove, and shot little

gleams of light through the cracks, and did its best to warm his toes; and after he was quite warmed through, and had given up the idea of supper that night, he groped his way up the dark, ricketty stairs to bed.

Now it is a hard matter to go to bed supperless — especially when a boy has been studying all the long afternoon, and has spent part of the evening in the clear, appetite-giving air. How would you like to try it, *you* that hardly know what it is to feel hungry? But aside from his empty stomach, Joe had an aching heart, and that was harder to bear than the other pain. Candle-light was a luxury which he knew nothing of at bed-time, and it was not so much of a hardship to grope his way in the darkness. The long, low, cheerless room at the top of the house he had all to himself, — that was one comfort! The five little Jumpers slept in a room below. Now as he reached this cold chamber he walked straight to the window in the end and looked out.

The great dome of sky above him was almost dazzling with its wealth of stars. Brilliant, glittering, twinkling, they looked down upon him as with ten million eyes. Not a trace of cloud was there to be seen, — nothing in the wide vault but stars, — save where the city belfreys and steeples towered up silent and dark. The young moon had gone down.

Now as he sat here a great crowd of turbulent thoughts came rushing into his mind. He thought of his friend Harry, now probably enjoying himself in his father's pleasant parlor, where everything was bright and joyous and comfortable. He imagined to himself the delicious supper which his friend had eaten. And when bed-time came, he would go to sleep in a warm, gas-lit room, in a snug little bed with plenty of coverlets. And then Joe thought of *himself*. Here he was in the dark and cold, with nothing but stars for a light. *His* bed was made of some waste stuff which the car-

penter had found time to knock together, and upon it there was just one poor, ragged quilt. Hungry and faint, he would have been glad of the crumbs which had fallen from his friend's plate. Oh, why *was* there so much difference in their lots? And then came a quick thought of the treasure which he had found.

Ah, poor Joe! now you are slipping all unwittingly into the Tempter's clutches! He is in this cheerless, gloomy old garret-chamber, and presently you will have a sharp conflict with him. God help you!

Vividly, just as if it had been painted before his eyes, he saw the cheerless life which he was living rise up before him, — oh, *so* desolate and dreary! He saw himself — ragged and patched — shunned and despised by all respectable people, by all his school-mates, except dear, warm-hearted Harry. No matter if he were just as smart, and intelligent, and good as they, it all availed nothing. It was no matter

at all that he loved nice things, and comforts, and all the luxuries which other boys possessed, he could not have them. It was useless to think of it.

Now on the other hand there rose up — just vivid and distinct — the wonderful cup which he had found this very night, — all its rim a-glitter, and its sides shining with silver frost-work, as he had seen it in the moonbeams. And with the cup he saw a multitude of other things. There was himself — not ragged and patched this time, but neat and well-dressed. There were books, the very books which he had longed for! There was an abundance of every thing nice to eat, and somehow he seemed to see everything through a rose-colored medium. All around him was joy and brightness and pleasure. People no longer shunned nor frowned upon him, but said — "How are you, Joe, my boy?" and his school-mates were friendly and cried — "Joe, you're a fine fel-

low!" And as he looked, all these comforts and blessings seemed to radiate from this wonderful cup. If he turned away his eyes from it, there was the old miserable, cheerless life, staring him in the face again.

Were not these queer things for poor Joe Gray to see while looking at the stars? But you know the Tempter painted them for him!

Presently in his ears something whispered — to poor Joe in the silence it sounded wonderfully distinct — "Now which will you choose? To live this wretched, hungry life, be sneered at, scolded, starved, taken from school and abused; or keep this wonderful cup — which is yours, of course — and with it purchase all the luxuries, pleasures, and comforts which you have seen shining about it? Now which will you do? You'll have to decide one way or the other, presently!"

The boy shivered — not with the cold — and sat perfectly still. Just then,— as if to in

crease his temptation — there came up from below the harsh tones of Mrs. Jumper's voice. Oh, how shrill and cross it was! Then Jumper retorted in gruff tones, and then there came heavy blows, the stove-pipe rattled, chairs were overturned, and the crazy house shook with the jar of heavy feet. After a few minutes of subdued scuffling, Jumper screamed out — "Let go of my hair!" and then he heard a sharp, ringing blow, which made the woman cry out with pain. Oh, how bright the cup looked at this moment! how dazzling! how tempting!

If you — well-beloved, well-fed, home-sheltered boy — had been in poor Joe Gray's place in that cold garret, — penniless, hungry, and your ears filled with the coarse cries of those scufflers below, — would you have yielded to the Tempter at your elbow and kept the cup?

Joe suddenly thrust his fingers into his ears

to stifle these sounds, and walked away from the window to his miserable little bed in the corner. Hurriedly he crept in, and drew the coverlet over his eyes to shut out the glittering object which danced before them. He would not decide then, he thought; perhaps he should feel differently in the morning. And then the Tempter was baffled for a little while; but it was a long, long time before sleep touched his eye-lids, and all the heavy minutes the stars looked in upon him, — looked in with their pure, calm, unwavering eyes.

When Harry Thorpe left his friend at his mother's call, he found the tea-table waiting for him. But before he could eat his supper he ran up to his room, and placed the precious cup under his pillow. His mother chid him a little for his tardiness, and enquired —

"Who is that ragged-looking boy, my dear?"

"Why," said Harry, with downcast eyes, hardly knowing how his mother would favor the acquaintanceship, — "it's a friend I made at school, mother. He's poor, but that — that doesn't make him any worse, does it?"

"Certainly not, Harry; I only hope he's not a bad companion."

"He's a better boy than I!" said the son, warmly.

Whereupon his mother allowed him to eat his supper in peace. After he had finished, he loitered in the parlor a little time, turning Ellen's music-sheets for her as she played. And a trifle before the clock struck eight, he announced his intention of going to bed.

"What, so soon?" said his mother; "are you ill, Harry?"

"No, ma'am, not at all," he replied; "but I'd rather go early to-night, I believe. I don't care to sit up."

"He misses papa," said sister Sophy after

he had gone out, "and I think he studies pretty hard now-a-days. At any rate it's a good thing for him, isn't it, mamma? 'Early to bed, and early to rise,' you know."

"Yes," said the mother, little thinking why her son wished to reach his room; I hope Harry will always stick to early hours. He generally wishes to sit up till ten, though."

Once in his room, Harry drew the cup from under his pillow, and proceeded to inspect its beauty more closely by the single gas-jet which was burning. It fairly dazzled him with its wonderful glitter.

"Oh," he thought to himself, "Joe has picked up a fortune this time! I wonder if it is really that old gentleman's? Pshaw! it can't be, for that was a crazy man we saw, and he could not possibly possess such a thing as this. But it *is* funny how it came by that step!"

Long he wondered and speculated whence it

came, and turned it from side to side to let the light fall on every particle of its rich tracery. Then he placed it under one of the pillows of the bed, and soon after laid his own head beside it. And sleep came and quickly touched his eye-lids, and set him to dreaming about it.

Now hardly had he fallen asleep before there was a sharp pull at the bell below. Ellen, the harsh-voiced servant-girl, answered the call. She found a suspicious looking character there, and only opened the door a trifle, — just enough to let a ray of light fall upon the visitor's face. An old cloak enveloped him, and his gray locks were crowned with a hat of ancient fashion, while in his hand he carried a black valise. In truth he looked very much like a certain old gentleman of antiquarian tastes, who is somewhat familiar to us already. "Is the master of the house at home?" he enquired eagerly. "No sir–r–r!" said Ellen shortly; telling the truth, however,

as Mr. Thorpe was absent in a neighboring city on business. "Then can I see the mistress?" demanded the old gentleman. "No sir; I'll do your errand, sir, if you have any." "Well," he said in a nervous, hurried manner. "I stopped to make enquiries whether any of your master's family had seen a cup — a silver cup — which I lost opposite this house, I am positive! If so, I can prove that I am the rightful owner. I purchased it only a few hours ago, and the receipt of payment is in my pocket."

Ellen stared blankly for a moment, in utter bewilderment. She thought the man crazy.

"Why, she exclaimed, "what do you mean? A cup? We've seen no cup! What should we know about your cups or dishes?"

"But," remonstrated the old man, "there were two boys at the gate when I passed. Perhaps *they* will remember. I stumbled — I fell — and they were looking on, and I *must*

have lost the cup there! Would you be so good as to — "

"No sir!" came from Ellen's lips; "what do you take my master for? Do you think any of his family would keep your miserable cup if they had happened to find it? Good-evening, sir," and slam went the door in his very face. The old gentleman stood on the steps for a moment with a very disconsolate air. Then he passed down the steps into the darkness. Ellen went back to the parlor, congratulating herself upon getting rid of "that crazy man" so easily. When there her mistress said —

"Who in the world were you talking to so loudly, Ellen?"

"Why, ma'am," she replied, "the queerest old fellow! — as crazy as a loon! and he tried to make me think some of the family had a cup which belonged to him, — as if master's folks would keep that which was not their

own! But I sent him where he belonged, ma'am."

And that was all the mistress ever knew about it.

CHAPTER VI.

A FRUITLESS QUEST.

DOWN the walk into the street passed Mr. Pendleton. The sharp slam of the door rang in his ears and confused his poor old head sadly. He stopped by the gate to look back at the stone cottage, and to mutter —

"This *must* be the house, and there were two boys standing at the gate! I remember them both; but, after all, they might not have found the cup. There's plenty of people passing all the time, I suppose, and there's no telling who picked it up. Alas! alas!" he cried, beating his breast, "I am undone! How could I have been so careless?"

He might well ask that question. It really seemed as if the old gentleman had been rather more absent-minded than usual; for, after leaving the curiosity-shop, he had placed his new acquisition in the valise, on the top of all his baggage, and then had forgotten to lock it. As the little valise was very full, was it any wonder that the cup slipped from its shallow resting-place when its master stumbled and dropped his baggage? He had gone through the streets in such a hurried, absent manner, that his recollection of things and places was extremely dim.

When he arrived at his friend Harvey's residence, he at once proceeded to show him the wonderful relic which he had been so fortunate to secure; but on looking in his baggage he found it gone! Imagine his astonishment and dismay! So great was the shock that at first the poor antiquary could recollect nothing. Vainly he rubbed his forehead, and pulled at

his gray locks. Where *could* he have lost it? For a few minutes it was useless for his friend to question him, — he could remember none of the circumstances of his walk. He sank down in an arm-chair, and buried his face in his hands. In this position he sat a long time, while his poor scattered wits came slowly back — bit by bit — till at last he had some vague recollection of his unfortunate tumble.

"Ah —" he cried, "I have it at last! I see it, now! I see it!"

"Where? where?" cried his friend.

But without waiting to answer, the old gentleman seized his valise, and forgetting his cane, rushed out. Down the street he went as fast as ever went old gentleman of his age, straight to the stone cottage before which he stumbled. He remembered seeing two boys at the gate, and had no doubt but what they had picked it up. So he rushed to the front door, rang the

bell, and met with but poor success, as we have seen.

And now he stood upon the side-walk, his hopes greatly crushed. He knew not which way to turn. He stared up and down the side-walk, rubbed his head as he had done in his friend's parlor, and stood stock-still. Then he remembered the little step in the walk, and placing his valise beside the fence, he got down upon his stiff old knees and groped about in the darkness. No cup was there. A man coming up the street stumbled over the crouched figure in the old cloak, and was very wrathful.

"Take care, old chap!" said he, "or you'll get into the lockup! What business have you to be crawling about on your hands and knees in the dark, tripping folks up?"

Poor Mr. Pendleton made the best apology he was able, and concluded with:—

"I'm looking for my cup, good sir. Have you seen it? —an ancient, thick-rimmed, silver cup?"

The man gave a long whistle. "Stark, starring crazy!" he said pityingly; "I — well, I didn't know that, old chap, or I wouldn't have been so hard on ye," and with this remark he passed into the darkness.

"Crazy, am I?" muttered the old gentleman to himself; "well, I begin to believe I am. How could I have lost that cup if I were not?"

After some deliberation, he took up his valise and entered the yard next to Mr. Thorpe's, passed up the walk, and rang the door-bell. Again a servant answered his call, — a servant more polite than Ellen had been, — but who refused to let him see her master or mistress, and who answered all his questions very briefly, and with much astonishment in her tone. Baffled again, he hurried out to the street, beating his

breast as he went. "I never shall find it!" he cried; "it's no use. I might as well give up." Nevertheless, he continued his search, — hoping against hope; thinking that possibly the cup had rolled out before he stumbled, and that he should find it lying upon the walk.

Now the stars were out brightly, and as the moon was gone, their light was all he had to guide him, save when the glow from the house-windows streamed across his path. It was a weary search, and of course a fruitless one.

He reached the little curiosity-shop from whence he had started with his treasure, and then turned to retrace his steps with many a sigh. A hundred times he cried out against his thoughtlessness, and what with beating his breast, and muttering to himself,—it was no wonder that people thought the strange figure had broken loose from the Insane Asylum.

He found his friend anxiously waiting his appearance. Mr. Harvey himself began to

have doubts whether the old gentleman was quite clothed in his right mind, and it was a great relief to see him come back safe and sound. He knew by the way the old gentleman's head drooped that his search had not been successful, and made haste to comfort him.

"Come, cheer up, sir," he exclaimed; "there's nothing like keeping up good spirits. The cup must be somewhere in the city, and we can recover it without much trouble I think. We'll set the police to hunting it up; they're great for ferretting out such things, sir." Whereupon Mr. Pendleton was so much comforted that he partook of some biscuit, and drank a cup of tea. In the meantime, Mr. Harvey slipped out and called a cab, well-knowing that his friend's aged limbs would not carry him much farther that night. So, when the old gentleman had finished his slight repast, he was bundled into the cab. Mr. Harvey took

his place beside him, and ordered the coachman to drive to police-headquarters.

After a long ride through many streets, the cab stopped before a building in the central part of the city, and the old gentleman was helped out.

"There," said his friend, "now collect your thoughts a little, for you'll have to answer some questions. This is the headquarters of the police — the city-police — and we are going to put the matter in their hands. If any one can find the cup, 'tis they. Ready to go in, sir?"

Yes, Mr. Pendleton was quite ready to do anything which promised to be the means of finding his lost treasure, and after directing the cab-man to wait their return, Mr. Harvey led the way in. The room which they entered was not very well lighted, but it disclosed several policemen with bright stars on their breasts, who were lounging about a gloomy coal-stove. At a desk, strewn with papers, sat

an elderly man, before whom Mr. Harvey at once led his friend. The policemen around the stove stared hard at the old gentleman, and doubtless thought that a subject for a mad-house was about to be committed to their charge.

"Well, Captain," said Mr. Harvey, addressing the elderly gentleman, "my friend, here, has lost a cup. We want to put the matter in your hands."

"Very well," said the Captain briskly, "give us the particulars."

As he said this he looked straight at the old antiquary, took up his pen, and signified that he was ready. Now Mr. Pendleton could no more have given the whole sum and substance of the affair in one continuous narrative, than he could have produced his missing treasure by magic. This the Captain of Police soon perceived, for the old gentleman wandered off in long accounts of different articles of *virtu* which he had collected; and, though it was doubtless

very interesting to himself, it annoyed the Captain sadly.

"Stop! stop!" he cried presently, "I can't make head or tail of this. What kind of a cup did you say it was?"

"Silver, sir," replied the antiquarian meekly.

"What style?"

"Antique, — with clusters of leaves and stems upon a ground of fretted — "

"Hold! that's sufficient. We don't want *all* the particulars. Is there any name upon it, or any peculiar mark by which we can identify it?"

"Yes sir!" cried Mr. Pendleton eagerly, "there's an old-fashioned *Z* upon the bottom of it. It's cut in deep and plain. It's the mark — "

"That'll do. I think I know something about it now. A silver cup — antique style — with a *Z* upon the bottom of it. Now where did you lose it?"

This question was harder to answer. He could not tell for a certainty, but thought he lost it in front of a brown stone cottage in—

"Oh," interrupted the Captain, "then it was not stolen? Hum–um–m — that's a different matter! You lost it yourself. Why, were you carrying it in your hands?"

"No, sir, it was in my valise," replied the old gentleman.

"Then I suppose you lost valise and all," said the captain, "and want us"——

"Oh, no, sir," said Mr. Pendleton, "the valise is safe and sound."

"Well, then, please explain what you do mean!" said the captain with annoyance.

Here Mr. Harvey interposed to say—

"His valise was open, and he supposes that he lost it when he stumbled over a step in the walk on Bray Street. He thinks it rolled out then, and hat some passer-by has picked it up."

The captain of police gave a great stare of astonishment at hearing how the treasure was lost, and scrutinizing our worthy antiquarian keenly, he looked at Mr. Harvey and tapped his forehead significantly.

"No," said that gentleman in a low tone, "he isn't crazy, — only a trifle odd, and very absent-minded."

"I should say so," remarked the captain, drily; and then to the old gentleman — "Well, sir, if that is the way you lost your cup, I advise you to advertise by all means. Offer a good big reward, and you'll probably get it. There's nothing like offering a fat reward! How much was the cup worth?"

"A thousand dollars," answered Mr. Pendleton, who, by this time, had begun to lose heart.

At this reply the captain's face betrayed great incredulity, — very likely he thought the old gentleman was under the influence of one

of his absent-minded fits, — but Mr. Harvey said —

"It's quite true. That's the sum he paid for it this very night. You see, it's a rarity — a great rarity; there's not another like it in existence. Now, rather than lose it he will pay almost any sum."

"Good gracious!" said the officer in an undertone, "to think of carrying a thousand dollars about in the top of an open valise! Well, well, it's all sorts of folks that it takes to make the world, and it's my opinion he's one of 'em;" and turning to the antiquary he said — "Now I think of it, what reason have you to think that it was not stolen from your valise as you walked along? Of course you were in a crowd more than once, and what was there to hinder it's being removed?"

Surely, here was a predicament! Neither the old gentleman nor his friend had thought of such a thing before; but, as the captain had

said, what was there to hinder its removal? The old man was dismayed, and would hardly have noticed the loss if the whole contents of the valise had been removed.

"Yes!" said the captain, with a faint trace of a smile upon his features, "it would be the easiest thing in the world to do! Why, a raw hand at the business could have done it; and if that is the way it was done — as I am inclined to think — why, sir, I must say the chances of recovering it are very few. You could only hope to get it by offering a reward which was greater than it's value."

At these words — his confidence in the police all gone — our poor antiquarian dropped down in a chair with a heavy sigh. He wished he had never left quiet, peaceable Darnleigh to follow such a wild-goose chase. He longed for the comfort of his easy-chair, and the quiet of his great dusty rooms. His limbs ached, and his head throbbed violently, and he was

very much disgusted with the world at large. He mentally vowed that if ever he got safely back to the delicious solitude of his cabinet, not all the silver cups that could be crowded into Morton's curiosity-shop should tempt him out again.

"But," said the Captain, after some meditation, "there's one consolation; not one person in a thousand would suspect the real value of this cup. You may safely conclude that whoever has found it, or stolen it, will never dream that it's worth more than its weight in silver. That, you see, is to your advantage, for you can offer a reward accordingly. A hundred dollars, to commence with, would be quite fair, I should say."

At this, Mr. Pendleton brightened up a little.

"And," continued the Captain, "there's another thing to be done. You must put all the jewellers on the watch for it, and then, if it

is offered for sale, both cup and thief can be secured. But to this part of the business we can attend, if you wish. The advertising you had better do. Now, sir, for my instructions."

The Captain had evidently been hindered long enough with Mr. Pendleton's troubles, and was getting impatient. Mr. Harvey looked around at his friend, saw that he looked very tired and warm, and accordingly took the business into his own hands.

"Well, Captain, said he, "do your best to look it up, and we'll do *our* best. Don't spare any money or pains to find it. And if you'll hand me that pen by your elbow, I'll write the reward, and have it out in the morning papers."

The Captain handed over the pen as desired, and Mr. Harvey wrote, — offering one hundred dollars for the return of the cup. Of course all necessary descriptions were given, and directions as to the place where it should be left. Then he bade the Captain good-

evening, assisted the old gentleman back to the cab, and ordered the driver to set them down at the *Courier* office as speedily as possible.

By this time the streets were getting thinned of vehicles somewhat, and they travelled rapidly. After the lapse of a few minutes the cab stopped, and there was the dingy *Courier* building before them, with flaming jets of gas in the windows, and the clanking and rumbling of the presses filling the air. Only Mr. Harvey got out, and he speedily returned. And then they were whirled away homeward.

Ah, this wonderful cup was not such a very fortunate possession after all. You see that poor Mr. Pendleton was nearly worn out with bustle and anxiety on account of it; and was not poor Joe Gray quite as much to be pitied? And all this time it lay snugly under Harry Thorpe's pillow, who seemed to be the least disturbed by its existence of any one into whose hands it had fallen.

CHAPTER VII.

YIELDING TO TEMPTATION.

PALE dawn-light trembled in the East, — the clear, shining, unclouded East — and soon warm flashes of light flew up the sky and burned ruddily there. The city's steeples stood up soft and gray against this rosy glow, and when at last the molten rim of the sun pushed up behind the hills it set the tower-windows and the burnished vanes and weather-cocks all a-flame. And when the sun had cleared itself from the hills, and had risen above the line of slated roofs, some of its stray beams wandered into Joe Gray's little window, fell across his eyelids, and awoke him.

Joe opened his eyes, looked around upon the bare little room, and yawned prodigiously. He felt very faint and stupid, and not at all like getting up. Very likely he would have taken another nap had not Mrs. Jumper's shrill voice cried at the foot of the stairs —

"Joe! Joe Gray, get up this minnit! — you'll lose your breakfast if you don't."

Now by this time he felt quite too hungry to lose another meal, and accordingly made haste to obey Mrs. Jumper's commands. Shivering in the chilly air of the garret, he drew on his ragged garments and the old boots, and hastily descended the dark stairs. Jumper had eaten breakfast and gone to his work. But the five little Jumpers were ranged around the table, and their mother was busily engaged in filling their mouths.

"Come!" said she, as Joe appeared, "don't stand shiverin' over that stove. If ye expect

anything to eat ye'll have to get it pretty quick. Laws knows it's goin' fast enough!"

Thus admonished, Joe came around to his corner of the table and sat down on a rough stool which Jumper had fashioned.

"Pan-cakes and soup," said the busy mother of the five; "which 'll ye take?"

"Soup," said Joe, inhaling the appetizing odor. Mrs. Jumper ladled out a plateful of the broth, adding two potatoes, a very small fragment of meat, and a slice of bread.

"There," said she, "don't go to callin' for more. That's all we can spare this morning. Takes a plaguy sight to fill these young uns."

Joe thought so too, as the hungry five were on their third plateful. One was supposed to be enough for him. And he had not had a mouthful since the scanty crust of yesterday noon. However, Jumper's children had the best right, and Joe was not at all inclined to

find fault this morning. He was only too glad to get anything with which to stay the gnawing of his stomach.

Mrs. Jumper was in better humor on this occasion; the angry flush had died out of her cheeks leaving them pale and sallow, and, for a wonder, her back hair was twisted into its place. This last bit of tidiness was always a sure sign that Mrs. Jumper was in a pleasant mood. And now when Joe had finished his scanty allowance of soup, she added an extra potato, for which the boy was very grateful; and having eaten this he went back to his seat at the stove. The fire roared and sparkled in the old stove, and shed a grateful warmth round about, and the boy thought it one consolation that, if he could not get enough to eat, at least there was genial heat enough and to spare.

While sitting here he suddenly remembered *the cup!* A thought of it had not entered his

head before that morning, and now he remembered that he had agreed to meet Harry at eight o'clock. He looked up at the dingy, smoke-stained time-piece behind the stove, and saw it lacked fifteen minutes of the appointed time. Hurriedly he took up his battered cap to go, when Mrs. Jumper called out —

"Where ye goin'?"

"Up the street," replied Joe, rather indefinitely, "and then I'm going to school."

"Well," said she, after a silence in which Joe had waited in some trepidation, "go long with ye! But remember, though, that you have got to wind up matters at school. Get all ready to leave Friday night!"

"Yes," said Joe faintly, and went out.

Oh, what a lovely morning it was. Frost-crystals spangled everything, and glittered like splintered diamonds on all the bare fence-posts, and the spots on the flagging where the snow had melted, or been swept off. Great columns

of blue smoke crept up sluggishly into the rosy air, and hung about the spires and towers till it turned to golden haze in the sunshine. The great city had stirred to life, and there was a cheery bustle everywhere. Milk-men rattled about with their cans, and baker's carts were rumbling up and down, carrying hot biscuit for people's breakfasts. Cabs and coaches were carrying people to the depot, to catch the morning train. Early business-men, in comfortable over-coats, were hurrying to their offices. Shop-girls, with their little dinner-baskets, were tripping briskly to work,— now in light-hearted, merry knots, chattering like magpies; and again there were solitary figures who looked as if they had just come to the city and were yet homesick.

All this busy life pleased Joe as he walked along, and somehow sent a cheerier thrill through his heart. It all looked as if there were an abundance of happy, comfortable

people in the world, and very likely he thought there was some chance for him to taste something of this life.

He passed a market where the butchers displayed great sides of beef, and where legs of mutton, veal, chickens and turkeys hung in festoons on the wall. At one stall a man was serving up hot meals for the laborers who were going to their work. Joe lingered a minute to enjoy the appetizing odors which were wafted from this capacious eating-place. Oh, how delicious the ham and eggs, the roast oysters, and the hot rolls smelt! And the odorous clouds of steam which rose from the coffee-cups were fairly tantalizing to the hungry boy. Again to him, as he stood there, came the vision of the cup. It was just as if it said — "What a fool you are, Joe Gray! The idea of giving up such a treasure! Why, boy, it will get you a hundred such breakfasts as these, — to say nothing of all the rest of the good things which it will buy."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Joe, "I mustn't stand here! I mustn't think of it!" and straightway he turned his back to it all, not daring to allow himself another look at the tempting viands. So, you see, no matter which way he turned, there stood the Tempter with his wiles and blandishments. Everywhere, *everywhere* there was something to allure him. Will it be very strange if he yields?

Along the pavement Joe hurried, and did his best to drive away all thoughts of temptation. Presently he began to whistle — a merry whistle it tried to be — but fell very far short of that. The keen air crept in through the holes in his boots, and benumbed his toes sadly. Then he began to run, — partly for warmth, and partly to run away from the Tempter. But that Evil one ran quite as fast as poor Joe did, and was present every moment. He could no more run away from him than from his own shadow, in fact, I think

that — all unknown to the poor boy — the Tempter was riding upon his shoulder.

A long way he carried this burden, — from the butcher's stall up to the aristocratic part of the city, where he came into the street lined with brown-stone houses. He passed the little step in the pavement with trembling. What could there be to tremble at?

In a minute more he stood at Harry's gate, and then the Tempter left him for a little time, or rather he forgot his presence in the pressure of other thoughts which came into his mind. How should he find Harry? Would those rich, grand people let such a ragged fellow as himself into their nice house? Would not that disagreeable servant-girl drive him away?

He lingered at the gate till he was too cold to stand still any longer, but no Harry made his appearance. Softly he lifted the gate-latch, and went up the nice walk in much trepida-

tion. He would not have been at all surprised had some one opened the front door and bade him leave the premises. But the elegant front door with its rich plate glittering in the sun, did not open, and he reached the corner of the house in safety. Here he followed the walk around to the kitchen-door, and after a few minutes of hesitation at last mustered courage enough to rap. After some waiting, the door opened — letting out a savory smell of breakfast — and there stood Ellen the house-maid.

"Well?" she said sharply, eyeing him with very cold eyes.

"Can I see Harry?" asked Joe, timidly.

"See Harry! — he isn't up yet," said Ellen, coldly.

"But can I wait till — till he — till you call him?" ventured Joe.

"Master Harry doesn't like to be called mornings. He gets up when he pleases. I shouldn't like to disturb him." It was very

plain that Ellen meant to keep Harry Thorpe's friend out.

"But," said Joe faintly, "he told me to come. He told me to come here at eight o'clock."

The house-maid frowned. "I wish Master Harry would give up his foolish notions," said she; "I'm out of patience with him! — bringing beggars and all kinds of trash here to bother me. Say, what do you want of him?"

Joe turned very red, but did not answer.

"Come," said the cook from within, "if you don't shut that door breakfast 'll freeze up!"

"Yes, in a minute, cook," said Ellen; then turning to Joe she said: —

"Well, I 'spose you've got to come in. But don't you never come here again to see him, for if you do I'll tell his father, and have a stop put to this business. Mercy! what boots you've got on. You'll track the stair-carpet all up, and I shall have to sweep after

you. But I 'spose you'd have to see him if you broke the stairs down with walking up 'em. Come along — this way! Take care! don't touch the wall-paper with your clothes."

Now Ellen was one of those persons, who, when they cannot have their own way, are determined to revenge themselves by making other people as uncomfortable as possible. And with poor Joe she succeeded. After she had piloted him through a dim hall, where his feet sunk noiselessly into a soft carpet — such a wonderful thing Joe had never seen — she stopped at the foot of a broad flight of stairs, saying: —

"Now go up these stairs, and you'll find a hall. His is the first door you come to, and look here! don't you stop to look at things. Keep straight on, and mind your business. Now go along with you."

Joe gladly obeyed. He was not at all sorry to hear this disagreeable servant go back to the

kitchen. At the first door in the hall he rapped, obeying Ellen's injunction strictly, and looking neither to the right nor left. No one answered, and he rapped again. Still no voice bade him enter, and he lingered in some doubt by the door. Then he rattled the knob a little, and finally ventured to turn it. The door swung open, and revealed Harry sound asleep — asleep in such a beautiful, wonderful room as poor Joe had never set eyes upon. "Oh, he lives like a prince!" he cried to himself, and with these words there was the Tempter back once more! Softly he entered, and softly he closed the door behind him, and stood silently in that sleeping-room, upon which wealth had lavished every adornment.

"I declare!" said Joe to himself, with a little bitter laugh, "I don't wonder that he thinks it's a dreadful thing to be poor! *He* to be troubled because he's *poor!*"

Then he went up to the bedside and touched

his friend's face gently, and whispered in his ear — "*Harry!*" Whereupon Harry awoke with a little start, and stared blankly at his friend a moment before he was released from sleep's chain enough to comprehend anything.

"Oh, it's you, Joe, is it?" he exclaimed; "well, I *am* sleepy this morning!" and upon that he yawned so prodigiously that he could say no more. At last: —

"Well, I'm glad to see you, anyhow, Joe! Why, how did you find your way up?"

"The woman in the kitchen showed me," said Joe.

"Cook? — Ellen? — well, it was good of her, anyhow! I wouldn't have believed she would have done me such a good turn. Now sit down, Joe, for I'm in no hurry to get up. I want to talk about the — the — you know!" and putting his hand under the pillow next his head, drew out the wonderful thing of beauty.

"*O–h–h–h!*" exclaimed Joe, with dazzled eyes, "I didn't know it was so beautiful."

Harry placed it on the little stand by the head of the bed, where the sunbeams fell straight across it. Its burnished sides fairly blazed, and lit every fragment of the wonderful work. Around the sides was twined a rough-stemmed vine with fritted bark, — its roughness and thorniness relieved by graceful leaves with clinging tendrils. And running in a wavy pattern under vine and leaf, was the wonderful arabesque of frost-work, — precisely like the frost-spangles which he had seen upon stone and fence that very morning, Joe thought, — which sparkled so marvelously in the sunbeams. Oh, what a thing of beauty! and what wonders it would buy!

"Well," said Harry, when both had admired it sometime in almost breathless silence, "it *is* beautiful, and no mistake! Papa hasn't

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anything amongst all his silver things one-half so nice! — no, not one quarter."

Joe said not one word, but sat silently gazing upon his treasure, while down deep in his heart there was the same fierce struggle of the previous night going on. He felt — he knew what a wretched contrast he made, with his rags and seediness, to the luxury around him. He longed, oh! so much! for just a taste of comfort and neatness; for books; for something to eat; but most of all for *school.* Only one more day, and then — Here Harry interrupted with, "Well, Joe, I suppose you're going to decide about this, aren't you? — and this morning, too."

"Yes," said Joe, with the warm color coming and going in his cheeks, "I'm going to decide about it this morning."

"Are you really?" said Harry; "well, I'm glad of it! Now which are you going to do: keep it, or not?"

Joe wavered a moment, looked pleadingly into his friend's face as if for an encouraging word, then said —

"*I will keep it.*"

Well, the Tempter conquered that time, as he has before done so many, many times. But, before you judge Joe too harshly, remember his temptations! Ah, boys, what one of you, being in his place — ragged, hungry, despised and abused, and at the point of being taken from the school which you loved so intensely — would have had the courage to restored the treasure, lived on the same dreary life, when it was in your power to change all this to luxury and plenty?

CHAPTER VIII.

A HEAVY HEART.

HARRY sprang out of bed, and put both his arms around his friend's neck. "O you dear Joe!" said he, "now we can go together to school, and you'll not lose your place in the class. And you can have new clothes, and boots and books, and plenty to eat! O, Joe, what good fortune!" and thought not at all of the sin of tempting one's friend.

But the other did. He did not look joyful or merry in the least, nor did he return his friend's caress. At which Harry's face grew sober very suddenly, and he exclaimed —

"Good gracious! you look as grave as an owl. Why, what makes you?"

"Am I sober?" asked Joe, with a wretched laugh; "well, I don't want my head turned at the sight of so much money—or what will soon be money. I'm not used to it, you know."

"I know," said Harry, reflectively, "but you *do* look most dreadful dismal. Why, are you sorry you decided to keep it?"

"No—no," said Joe, resolutely; "I'm going to keep it. I'm going to school, and I'm going to have books and everything nice. How much shall I lend you till next quarter?" he added with a laugh.

"Not a penny!" said Harry, looking at his friend to see whether he were really pleased, or whether it was all a pretext to hide the heart-ache; "you'll need every cent of it, Joe. But where will you sell it?"

"Oh, there's places enough, I suppose,"

said Joe, indifferently; "I'll sell it where they will give me most. Why," he exclaimed suddenly, "how Jumper would stare to see me with a decent suit of clothes on! — and how Mrs. Jumper would throw up her hands!" and at the thought Joe laughed — rather hysterically.

"Don't!" said Harry, "you laugh so dismally! I never — "

The sharp peal of a bell cut him short. Joe started up trembling, at which his friend laughed, and said —

"It's only the breakfast bell, and my stars, Joe! I'm not half-dressed. What will mamma say?"

Joe was gazing steadfastly on the cup. Somehow it didn't seem so beautiful to him after he had really decided to make it his own.

"Now," said Harry, as he hurried on his clothes, "when will you sell it? That's the next thing to do." Joe made no reply. "For

you see," he continued, "you want the money pretty soon to pay your school-bill. You're out to-morrow, you know."

"Yes," said Joe, abstractedly.

"But there isn't time this morning, for it must be school-time already. So you'll have to wait. But how would to-morrow morning, do?"

"Well enough," said Joe; "are you going with me?"

"Yes, if you want me to. Perhaps if you tried to sell it they might take you for a-a—"

"Thief!" said Joe, with red cheeks; "yes, I know! I'd rather you'd sell it. I don't believe I could do it."

"Well," said Harry, as he donned his nice jacket, — "when we've got the money, you'll pay the school-bill first, I suppose; then you'll want new clothes, and then — oh, Joe, where *is* the hair-brush? I'm dreadful late for breakfast this morning!—and then, as I was saying,

— why, here 'tis under my coat, — and then, as I've been trying to say two or three times, you'll want books; and by that time there'll be a great hole in the money."

"Yes," said Joe dubiously, "it can't last always."

"But perhaps you'll find another by that time," laughed Harry, busy before the glass.

"Oh, no! I hope not!" cried Joe suddenly; "I don't want them! I wish I'd never seen this."

Harry said "Pshaw!" and looked at his friend's unhappy face in the glass.

"He's getting alarmed and nervous," he said to himself, then aloud: —

"I'm going down now, Joe. Will you stay here till I'm through breakfast?"

Joe looked at his rags and hesitated.

"What will *they* say?" he asked.

"Who? O, mamma won't say a word! I'll be back in fifteen minutes, and then we'll

start for school. Tumble over the books, or anything that pleases you," and Harry ran off down stairs.

Joe lingered in his chair till his friend's footsteps quite died away, and then walked to the tempting pile of books which lay — some on the floor and some on the rack. Drawing a long sigh, he sat down by the pile on the floor. What could there be for Joe Gray to sigh about? Was he not presently to be well-fed, well-clothed, and well-schooled? Listlessly he turned over volume after volume, to find that they had lost their accustomed interest for him. What could be the reason? "I'm dreadful stupid this morning!" thought he to himself; "I can't read a word in these books that I've been longing to see. Oh! what a fortunate fellow Harry is! — to have all these books on one birthday, besides the pony. And see the leaves he hasn't cut! Oh, I don't believe he's read one of these yet." With this, his eyes

left the books, and wandered about the pretty, sunshiny room. "Not much like mine!" said he to himself, as he looked at pictures and ornaments, and articles of clothing lying about. "Why, Harry must have a jacket for every day in the week, and one of those pictures — even the smallest — would buy me a suit of clothes." "But you've presently to have enough of everything;" said something within him. At this, he turned back to the books with the same weary sigh. Above him, on the little stand, stood the cup, and as it spangled and gleamed in the sunbeams, a dazzling ray smote his eyes now and then. This glitter did not look half so lovely as it had done, and he exclaimed impatiently — "O, I wish Harry would come and put that hateful thing out of sight! It dazzles me and puts my eyes out! And I really believe I wish it had never been found after all."

But Harry was gone at least half-an-hour in-

stead of fifteen minutss. It must have been nearly nine o'clock when Joe heard him come slowly up stairs whistling — "The Gem of the Ocean." At the top of the stairs he quickened his pace, and came bounding into the room with: —

"I say, Joe, but you've had to wait a long time, haven't you? And, if you'll believe me, it's nine o'clock already, and time for the school-bell to ring! We've got to hurry."

Joe got up from his seat on the floor.

"How did you like my books? Isn't there a pile of 'em? Come, fly around, Joe! Where's my overcoat?" rattled Harry; "and what are you going to do with the cup this morning?"

"Leave it with you," said Joe soberly, "if you'll keep it. I haven't a place to put it, you know."

"Well, just as you say. Let me see, — where can I hide it? Ellen will be sweeping

and rummaging about up here to-day, and if she should find it, — well, we should lose it, I suppose! But I know a safe place, Joe, where Ellen nor mamma never look. Here 'tis, right in this drawer — *my* drawer — and I've got the key to it. Bring on the cnp, and put it in here."

Joe complied, and Harry locked the drawer and put the key in his pocket.

"Now 't will be as safe," said he, "as though 't was in a bank-vault. But we *must* hurry off to school! Help me on with this overcoat, will you, Joe? there's a good fellow." Then they were ready.

"Now come on!" cried Harry, and led the way down, along the hall, out into the kitchen, and from there they speedily ran out on to the walk.

"Let's walk fast, Joe," said his friend, as they passed around the house; "we'll have tardy marks, already, I guess."

Joe said hardly a word during all the long walk, and Harry whistled to his heart's content, without any interruption.

Arrived at school, they found it had been commenced five minutes. "Tardy marks against both of you," said the teacher, as they entered, "unless you've brought an excuse."

"We haven't," said Harry; "it's our own fault."

Now, though this little circumstance had happened to Joe more than once before, yet this morning it depressed his spirits very much. He went to his seat, took out his books, and found that he could not study any more than he could read in Harry's books a half-hour before. What could be the reason, think you? Listlessly he turned over leaf after leaf, his heart growing more and more miserable every minute. He looked through the window behind him upon the fair, blue sky. Soft rounded clouds had risen, and were floating

brightly everywhere ; but sunshine nor clouds, nor fair blue sky pleased him at all. He looked across to the seat where his friend sat. Harry's brow was drawn up into a number of wrinkles, over a sum in his arithmetic, but that appeared to be the greatest of his troubles, for when he chanced to look up and meet Joe's heavy eyes, he smiled very brightly. "I believe he would laugh," said Joe to himself, "if everything went to destruction!" and his friend's cheerfulness only made his own heart more heavy. By-and by his class was called upon the floor, and to everybody's surprise, poor Joe failed most miserably.

"Joseph," said the teacher kindly, "are you ill?" Something in the boy's thin face touched him. "He doesn't look as if he had enough to eat," said he to himself, "and a boy that don't eat can't study."

"No, sir; I'm not ill," said Joe, in much

confusion, "but I–I–I couldn't study this morning."

"Very well," said the teacher, "I'll excuse you this morning, Joseph. You may take your seat."

And Joe took his seat and hid his face. Don't you think it was strange conduct for a boy who, ere another day had fled, was to be in possession of quite a little fortune? — who was to have that which his heart desired most?

Joe's teacher was somewhat surprised, because the boy was one of the most studious and faithful in his class, and nothing short of illness, he thought, could have made his lesson such a failure; so he granted him an indulgence which he would not have given to any of those well-fed, smartly-dressed boys before him. Presently Joe raised his head from the desk and took up his Philosophy.

"I'll be perfect on this, anyhow," said he to himself; "I won't get excused on another lesson!"

And putting his hands over his ears to shut out all sounds, he tried to bring his thoughts upon the day's lesson. But do all he would, they persisted in running upon another subject, — and that was *the cup!*

"Cup! cup! cup! *cup!* CUP! CUP!" cried poor Joe to himself, — "nothing but cup! O, I wish I had never found it! I wish it were in the sea! I wish it's owner had it!"

"But, my dear Joe," said something within him, "bear up and be a man, for you're presently to be rich!"

And then he shivered and stopped his ears tighter, and essayed to study his lesson. Such heaviness of heart the boy had never known, and he was troubled and fearful beside. He fancied — and it was nothing but fancy — that his teacher regarded him suspiciously. "Can

he have found out? — can he know about the cup?" he fearfully asked himself, — then laughed at his own fears the next minute. At play-spell he fancied that the boys regarded him with suspicious eyes, and cold glances: and that the knot who had gathered in the sunny angle of the building were whispering about *him*.

All these sensations were new to Joe, for until this time he had always carried an honest heart under his ragged jacket. Come cold or hunger or sneers, his heart had always been light and free from the burden of wrong-doing, and he had no one to fear. But now! — oh, how his heart ached with the dreadful weight which lay upon it! He trembled at the sound of a strange voice, he was fearful when his comrades whispered, and he could not meet his teacher's eyes. He suddenly found what bitterness there was in a guilty conscience, and learned how much harder the burden of

evil-doing was to carry, than the burden of want and poverty.

Well, this wretched and miserable day wore away very slowly. To Joe it seemed twice as long as school-days generally were, and when night came, he drew a great sigh of relief, and was happy enough when the word was given to pile the books away. He rushed out into the fresh air, which fanned his hot forehead gratefully, and walked silently with Harry towards home. The merchant's son was unusually silent, too, and did not whistle a single tune as they went down the street. Joe fancied that his forehead was drawn up with a wrinkle of trouble, — but then, Joe's fancies had not been at all reliable that day.

As they neared the stone cottage, Harry laid his hand on his friend's shoulder, and said compassionately: —

"I'm sorry for you, Joe!"

Joe's chin quivered, and he turned away his

head. He was not at all able to bear pity just then.

"You're as miserable as you can be, aren't you?" continued Harry; "now what is the matter?"

"Matter!" cried Joe, chokingly, "O, everything!"

Harry's arm went around his friend.

"Don't be so blue!" said he comfortingly; "why you never felt like this when you thought you had got to leave school! — not half so bad. And now — why, Joe, I can't understand it!"

Joe said not a word, but his chin continued to quiver. He could not control his tongue. The two walked on in silence till they reached the gate.

"Oh, dear," said Harry. "I can't bear to have you go home feeling like this. I shall be thinking how sad you looked all the evening. Come, Joe, brighten up!" he exclaimed, fain

to be very comforting; "remember to-morrow morning. Good-night," and they parted.

"Remember to-morrow morning!" rang in Joe's ears like bells. He walked down the street very sadly and slowly, and not at all like a boy who was to receive a large sum of money on the morrow. Why, what could be the reason? He was punctual at the supper-table that night, and succeeded in getting his scanty allowance of food. Mr. and Mrs. Jumper were quite amiable, and made no objections to his sitting by the stove. But for all that he went to bed very early, preferring the cold and solitude of the garret to the distracting noise of the little Jumpers as they rode to "Banbury Cross" on their father's knees.

When he had finally succeeded in getting warm under the old coverlet he chanced to look up, and there was the countless, calm-eyed stars looking in upon him! Oh, how

pure and holy they looked! — and peering into his eyes they seemed to whisper —

"*Thief! thief! thief!*"

"Oh, I can never look at them any more!" sobbed Joe, and made haste to hide his face from those unwavering, accusing eyes.

But I suppose that this was only one of Joe's "fancies" after all, and that the stars looked upon him with no sterner glances than they had ever done.

What could be the matter of him?

CHAPTER IX.

THE TEMPTER IS VANQUISHED.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Pendleton gave up his cup as gone forever. In vain his friend told him that as the reward had only been out one day, it was useless to look for the return of the treasure so soon. The old gentleman shook his head, and said — "I've no faith! — no faith! It's gone, and we shall never see it any more. Oh, how could I have been so careless?" As this was nearly the thousandth time which the old man had asked this question, Mr. Harvey thought it quite unnecessary to answer it.

"Why, sir," said he, "it will be nothing

strange if the cup don't make its appearance in a month. The news of the reward must be circulated among all classes of people, and even then it may be a long time before it reaches the ears of the guilty one. Then he may take time to consider the subject, whoever he is, and deliberate whether he can make most by keeping the cup, or by returning it, and claiming the reward. Or, the offer may not be sufficiently tempting, and we may have to offer a larger. Why, sir, when all things are thought of, I wonder at your being discouraged!"

But the old gentleman shook his head incredulously.

"It's gone! it's gone!" said he, shaking his finger solemnly, "and look as long as you like, you'll never find it!"

"Of course," said his friend, "we're not certain of the fact, but I'm tolerably confident that it will yet make its appearance from some quarter. So cheer up!"

But Mr. Pendleton refused to be comforted.

"Ah," said he, mournfully, "to think of the time I've wasted! Two whole days, and each of them seem like weeks. Why, I should have got my Tacigraphon read through by this time, and the notes all written out if I'd staid at home."

"Your *what?*" cried his friend.

"Why, my Tacigraphon, — my last old book! It's just one hundred and twenty-seven years and seven months old, the first day of this very month. I should have had it finished by this time, with notes!"

"Never mind," said Mr. Harvey, consolingly, "two days isn't much. We'll go down to the Historical Cabinet to-night, and mayhap you'll see something there which will pay you for the trouble you've had. What do you say, sir?"

Mr. Pendleton agreed to this proposition, and spent the evening in a tolerably comfortable

manner at the Historical rooms. He met with several ancient gentlemen of his own persuasion, who consoled with him upon the severe misfortune which he had sustained, and promised to use all their time and influence for the recovery of the precious cup — whose loss, as they said, would be such a heavy one to their science. From this meeting he went home somewhat encouraged, but no sooner had he entered the house than he announced his intention of going home on the morrow.

"What," said Mr. Harvey in surprise, "and not wait for your cup?"

The old gentleman shook his head. He was getting both fatigued and home-sick. He longed for the quiet of his dim and dusty rooms. Old Kate could cook and bake better, he thought, than all the city-cooks put together. When had Mr. Pendleton cared for cooking before? And, moreover, the bustle and roar of the busy streets troubled him, and

he had heard so many strange voices and seen so many new faces that his poor head was quite turned. Darnleigh was peaceful and quiet, — at least the street was where he lived, and there had never been anything to disturb him there, nor put his thoughts into such a turmoil.

"Oh," said the old gentleman, in the childish manner which sometimes came across him, — "I'm tired, and want to go home. It's still there. And now I think of it, the doves will miss me. They'll be hungry and Kate won't think to feed them! I forgot to tell her about it. I want to go home, — I *must* go home in the morning."

"Poor man!" said Mr. Harvey to himself, "I really believe he *is* a trifle crazed, or else he's getting into second childhood. I never saw him act so before, I'm sure." Then aloud — "Well, if you wish to go so bad you can take the morning train. It will bring you to

Darnleigh in the afternoon. Cheer up, sir, and I'll attend to looking up the cup,—there'll be no trouble about that; but I'm sorry you can't content yourself a little longer, for there's no knowing how soon the cup will make its appearance. It may come to light directly after you are gone."

But our antiquary was perfectly indifferent. The only object which he had now in view was to make his way home as speedily as possible. He would have left this disgusting Waynethorpe that very night could he have procured a conveyance.

Mr. Harvey saw his tired old friend to bed, and promised to awake him in time to eat his breakfast, and reach the early morning-train. He secretly hoped that the old gentleman would get rested by sleep, and awake refreshed and stronger of mind. He hoped that he could persuade him to remain a day longer. But on going up to the old man's room in the

morning, he found him not only awake but nearly dressed for the journey. He would not listen to a word of persuasion, but hurriedly finished his toilet, and could hardly be induced to drink a cup of coffee and eat a mouthful of toast, for fear that he should be too late for the train.

After he had been coaxed to partake of a few morsels, Mr. Harvey called a cab, and they drove to the depot. They were not a moment too early after all, and in a few minutes Mr. Pendleton — black valise and all — rolled off toward Darnleigh. The old gentleman actually smiled as he bade his friend good-by, — he was so happy at the prospect of being home in the course of the day.

Now in this same early morning-time — when the sun-light was just breaking upon the city, and Mr. Pendleton was speeding homeward — Joe Gray awoke to the consciousness of his troubles. "Remember to-morrow

morning!" was the first thought that flashed into his mind as soon as he was conscious of the dawn of day. "Oh, dear," said he dismally, "I wish it wasn't morning yet. Oh dear!" A sound of hissing and sputtering came up from Mrs. Jumper's frying-pan, and told him that it would soon be breakfast-time. "And Harry wanted me to come up bright and early this morning," thought he, "to–to—"

"Joe, get up!" cried Mrs. Jumper shortly, cutting off Joe's thoughts. He sprang out of bed, dressed hurriedly, and then walked to the little window. Somewhere behind the long dark line of houses the sun was burning redly, but belts of gray clouds hid the rosy flush in the sky, save where — here and there — the crimson broke through in little patches. The smoke from thousands of chimnies hung in sombre curtains in mid-air. Far away at the farther edge of the city, he saw a long trail of snow-white smoke, and heard the whistle of the

outward-bound train. Little thought he that it carried one whose mercy was presently to shield him from a dread punishment. And as he stood here he heard the little Jumpers race out to breakfast, and made haste to obey the lady's call to breakfast himself.

He was so abstracted and absent-minded at this meal that Mrs. J. remarked sharply —

"You needn't mope so 'cause you've got to leave school, Joe Gray! Why, a boy with the learnin' you've got ought to be satisfied. Just think! my Jumper never went to school but six months in his life. What ye think of that? and he's always got along well enough. Now see't you don't *forget* to bring home your books to-night, 'cause if you do Jumper 'll send you right back after 'em. We don't believe in *forgettin'* sir." Mrs. J. spoke as if she thought that Joe secretly intended to leave his books, and so have a pretext for going back to school on Monday morning. And as he was going out

the door she cried after him — "Remember! don't you go to *forgettin'*, sir!" The boy's heart was quite as wretched this morning as it had been the previous night. He certainly made no haste to reach Harry's in good season, but walked slowly and listlessly along. Perhaps he wished to be so tardy as to prevent the sale of the cup that morning. Whatever his intentions may have been, he was a long while in traversing the streets, and when he at last reached Harry's gate, he lingered a long time there, dreading to enter. But though he whistled and called, his friend did not appear, and he was obliged to go up the walk and around the house as he had done the previous morning. Again Ellen answered his rap, but this time her face was not so grim.

"Well, you're here again, are you?" said she; "what did I tell you I'd do if you came here again?" Joe was too miserable to make much of a reply. "You're the greatest bother

in the morning! — when one is busiest," said she, but let him in nevertheless.

Ellen had evidently had a word in Joe's favor whispered in her ear. Through the same rooms she led him as in the previous morning, and left him at the foot of the stairs with —

"Get up with you, and stay as long as you like!"

Joe slowly mounted the stairs, feeling much as a criminal does who is going to execution. He pushed open the chamber-door without waiting to rap, and found his friend up and partly dressed.

"Ho! I *am* glad to see you this time, Joe!" cried Harry, very cordially, with a side glance at his friend's sad face; "come here and sit down in this big chair beside me."

Joe complied, and sat down opposite his friend who was pulling on his boots and stockings.

"I declare!" thought Harry to himself, "I never did see Joe look so miserable! Why, I shouldn't think he had a friend in the world."

Joe said not a word,—not even "good-morning."

"Well," said Harry, briskly, stamping on the floor to settle his feet in his boots, "I suppose you've come on business this time. You are going to sell the cup this morning, aren't you?"

Joe's chin quivered, he looked appealingly at his friend, and then suddenly burst into tears. The falling drops did not merely overbrim his eyes, but they came in a wild, sudden gust which made him tremble from head to foot as he sat in the arm-chair. All his pent-up agony found vent now, and rushed forth with a passion and vehemence which fairly startled Harry, who looked at his friend in amazement and distress. He was at a loss to know what had produced this sudden burst of

feeling. At length he ventured to say softly —"Joe!" But Joe did not heed but continued to weep most passionately.

"Joe! *Joe!*" said he again, "what is the matter?"

No answer. At this Harry sat down on the arm of the chair and tried to pull his friend's hands away from his face.

"See here!" said he, earnestly, "what are you crying about? What ails you? Come, tell me, Joe," coaxingly; "did I say something that troubled you, or what?"

But not a syllable did he get from his friend till the tears had ceased to fall. Then Joe said faintly—"Where's the cup?"

"The cup? Why, it's in my drawer to be sure; where we left it yesterday morning. Did you think it was lost? My stars, Joe! I can't make nothing out of you this morning! Come, shall we go and sell it?"

Joe looked up through his tears with such an expression that Harry suddenly fell back.

"I shall never sell that cup, Harry," said he, very slowly and very firmly. A dead silence, in which both boys could hear their hearts beat. Then —

"*Not sell the cup?*" fell from Harry's lips.

"No, — never; not if I starve to death, nor never go to school another hour!"

Delivérance! — the Tempter was vanquished, and Joe free from his clutches. Harry stared at his friend as if he thought he had lost his wits. At last he said —

"Well, if I ever was astonished, I am now. Are you sure you know what you are talking about, Joe?"

"Yes!"

"And you mean that you'll give up the cup? Why, what changed your mind so suddenly?"

Joe wiped his eyes and said —

'If you had been as miserable as I have the last two days you wouldn't wonder at all! The greatest wonder is why I did not change my mind before. Oh, Harry, you can't think how miserable I've been!"

"You *did* look miserable," said Harry, "that's a fact! — and was it all about that cup?"

"Yes, every bit of it!" cried Joe brightly; "oh, I wonder I didn't give it up before! Why, I wouldn't keep it now for anything."

But just here the Tempter came back in the shape of his friend. It is a hard thing to be tempted by the one nearest and dearest to us, but Joe had it to endure.

Harry came back to the arm-chair and looked straight in his friend's face.

"Joe," said he sadly, "you can't go to school now."

"No," said Joe, bravely trying to keep up good courage. "And," continued the tempter,

"you'll have to be ragged and cold and half-starved!"

"Oh, Harry," cried Joe pleedingly, "don't talk like that! You make me want to keep it."

"And, besides all that, Jumper will put you to work, or send you out begging, and we can't see each other at all! Oh, Joe! just think of it!"

Joe did think of it, and found it hardest of all to bear. He moved about uneasily in his chair, and could not endure the thought of being separated from his friend. But suddenly his courage came back, and he got up—looking very resolute indeed.

"No!" said he slowly, "I'll never sell that cup if I'm starved and have to beg! It isn't mine, and I should be a thief if I kept it! I knew what a wicked thing I was doing all the time, but somehow I couldn't make up my mind to do right about it. I wanted to go to school so bad, and I was so hungry that night,

and Jumper and his wife grumbled so, that I thought I could do most anything to get rid of them. But I can't, for it would kill me to keep that miserable cup. I don't want it and I won't have it, and oh, you mustn't tempt me so, Harry!"

At this appeal, Harry's heart — always warm — was touched.

"You're right, Joe!" said he frankly, "though I never should have had the courage to told you, — I wanted you to go to school so bad. O, Joe, I *did* tempt you, — I've tempted you all the time. Come, now forgive me old fellow!"

At which Joe put his arms around his friend's neck, and said that there was nothing at all to forgive, and that he was *so* glad he had given up the cup, and that he was the happiest boy in the world, even if he had got to give up the school, and go ragged and cold. And with that the Tempter fled, and Joe was troubled by him no more.

CHAPTER X.

JOE'S REWARD.

"WELL," said Harry, after this declaration of Joe's, "what are you going to do with the cup? How will you find the owner, I mean."

"I'm sure I don't know. It must be some rich man's property. I should think he would be trying to look it up."

"We shouldn't know it if he was," said Harry.

"Oh, dear," sighed Joe, "I hope the owner will come pretty soon! I can't bear to keep it a moment longer. But if he shouldn't come —"

"Then 't would be yours till he did," said his friend.

But this prospect of ownership did not please Joe at all. He was anxious to get rid of the dangerous treasure. There was no knowing how badly he might be tempted before all was over. Then a bright idea came into his head.

"Why, Harry," said he suddenly, "I can tell you where we can find the owner! Look in the papers! — in the advertisements!"

"Sure enough," said Harry; "why didn't I think of it before? I'll bet you're right! I'll run down and get papa's paper this instant," and off he bounded.

Joe waited very impatiently for his return. Pretty soon he heard him coming back — taking two stairs at a time. Almost breathless with haste he rushed into the room, crying —

"I've — found — it! Here it is — the very first thing in big letters!"

Hurriedly he spread the paper upon the floor, and both boys got down upon their knees to read. And this is what they found: —

"LOST!

$100 REWARD. Lost on the night of the 23rd inst., about half-past five, an antique SILVER CUP. It is covered with a rich design of leaves and stems, and has a *Z* upon the bottom of it by which it may be identified. The above reward will be paid to the finder of said cup upon its return to Police Head-quarters, No. 37, Thrace St.; or to JAMES HARVEY, at his office, No. 270 West-High Street."

The boys looked in each other's faces, and were silent for a moment. Then Harry cried:

"Hurrah, Joe! you're in luck! One hundred dollars reward. Just think of it!"

Joe did not look very much pleased.

"I didn't notice any Z," said he.

"Nor I," said Harry; "but I'll get the cup and look," and taking the key from his pocket he went to the little stand in the corner, unlocked the drawer, and brought forth the treasure.

"Yes, here it is!" he cried, joyfully, "cut into the silver as plain as day," and laid it down on the paper for Joe to look at. Yes, there was the *Z* well cut into the smooth surface of the bottom. There could be no doubt but that it was the very cup, but Joe did not look very well pleased.

"Why," said Harry, "it's almost as good as though 'twas your own, and you could sell it. A hundred dollars will buy you a good many things, Joe."

"Yes, I suppose so," said Joe, indifferently.

"But aren't you glad?" grieved Harry, impatiently.

"Not very," said Joe, looking steadfastly at the deeply graven letter.

"Oh, dear, what a fellow! Now I'm out of all patience with you! What do you mean? Isn't the reward large enough? Do you want more? Why, I should think —"

"Stop!" interrupted Joe, with some energy; "the reward is large enough, and I don't want any more, and — well, I believe I don't want any reward at all."

"Wh–a–what?" stammered Harry, "not want any reward?"

"No, for you see, I don't think I deserve any. I was going to steal the cup — or what was just the same — and should have done it, but for happening to get my courage back this morning. I'm going to carry the cup down to the Police Office, tell them all about it, and refuse the reward. I don't deserve it, anyhow, when I was going to keep it and rob the owner."

"But," remonstrated Harry, "just think of it a moment. The reward is —"

"No, no, no," said Joe, resolutely, "don't talk to me about it! I don't want to hear. I'm going to carry the cup right to the Office, and leave it, and take nothing."

"Well," said Harry in despair, "when you've got you're mind made up there's no changing you, Joe Gray! But I *do* think you're foolish!"

"I guess I'd better go right off," said Joe, without minding this remark, "for it'll be school-time before long, and I don't want to be tardy my last morning."

"Yes," said Harry with emphasis, "your last morning! when, if you'd take the re —"

But Joe stopped his ears, and would not listen.

"Come," said he presently, "please show me the way down stairs, and let me go."

Harry led the way down in silence, and pi-

loted him safely to the kitchen-door, and there Joe stopped short, with tears in his eyes, to say —

"I wish you wouldn't be angry at me, Harry. I really think I'd ought — "

"Pshaw!" interrupted Harry, petulantly, "I'm not angry!" and left his friend without another word.

"He *is* vexed," thought poor Joe, as he hid the cup under his jacket, "but I can't help it! I was going to steal this and keep it for my own, when it belonged to another; and oh, how dreadful near I came to it! And now I don't think I deserve a hundred dollars, nor even a penny."

With this thought uppermost in his mind, he hurried down the walk into the street. The sun had not fairly shown his face that morning, there were so many thick gray clouds in the East; and a cold wind had risen, which chilled the boy to the very marrow.

"Ug–g–g–h," he chattered, "how cold 'tis!" but did not sigh at all when he thought of the warm clothes he was to have had that very day. Men in warm coats and cloaks were hurrying to their business, and Joe presently found himself in a crowd of people who were all making their way down town. In this justling current he was pushed about and trod upon, and had to hold tight to keep the cup in its hiding-place. "Rather of a cold morning, for such a thin jacket," said a cheery old voice, and instantly Joe felt something thrust into his hand. It was a dime. Very likely he would have refused to take it, but the crowd swallowed up the old gentleman who gave it, and the boy could not help himself. You will presently see that he was afterward thankful enough for the donation.

A little way farther, and he entered Thrace street, where the crowd was quite as great. Here, too, the current was dropping down-

town, and Joe had nothing to do but be borne along with the rest. He had passed the Police Headquarters many a time, and so was not at all at a loss to find the building. He pushed through the crowd, and went up the steps in some slight trepidation. The warm air of the room which he entered was agreeable enough to the boy's chilled limbs. Some sleepy policeman were nodding around the coal-stove. Passing them, he went directly up to the desk where the Captain sat writing. It was some minutes before that gentleman noticed his presence, but when he did, he looked up — stroking his whiskers — and said — "Well, I suppose dad's been fighting mam, and mam sent you up here to have dad carted off to the lock-up, eh?"

"No, sir," said Joe, with very red cheeks, — "I've come to bring back that -- that cup, sir."

"What cup?" said the officer, staring; —

"oh! — ah — I remember! You mean Mr. Pendleton's cup."

"I don't know who it belongs to," said Joe, trembling in spite of himself under the keen glance which the Captain suddenly bent upon him, "but the advertisement says it was to be left here."

—"Yes, sir! this is the place to leave it if you've got it," said the Captain, sharply; and getting off his high chair he came around to where Joe stood.

"Well," said he, "where is it?" and stood stock-still, looking very grim and stern.

Joe unbuttoned his jacket, took out the treasure, and handed it to the Captain. That gentleman expressed his astonishment by a long whistle.

"I declare!" said he, — "that is a beauty. I don't wonder the old chap was anxious about it. Nixby, come here and look at this."

One of the sleepy policeman left his chair by the stove, and came to where they stood.

"Did you ever see anything like that?" asked the Captain.

Nixby looked on rather apathetically, and asked — "Who's is it?"

"Why, that queer old gent's that was in here with Harvey the other night. He was in a dreadful stew about it. Offered a hundred for it two days ago, and here it is."

Nixby went back to his seat and fell to nodding again, and when the Captain had leisurely examined the wonderful piece of silver, he carefully placed it upon the top of his desk. Then turning about to Joe he surveyed him from head to foot, and said coldly —

"Well, sir, how did you come by this? Now remember! don't you tell me a lie, nor try to pass any sham-stories off upon me, for you see, it won't do at all. Just hold up your

head, stick out your toes, and answer like a major."

Joe thought it the most disagreeable voice he had ever heard. He could not help quailing, either, under those merciless eyes.

"Well," said the Captain, "in the first place, where did you get this cup? Now stick to the truth, sir."

"I found it on the side-walk," answered Joe, with very hot cheeks.

"On the side-walk, eh? — well how came you to find it?"

"I was going home from school, and in the dark —"

"Humph!" said the Captain, "going home from school in the dark, were you? That looks probable."

"But I was, indeed," said poor Joe, "for I stopped at Harry Thorpe's gate till it was real dark."

"All right," said the Captain unbelievingly, "go on!"

"And just as I had got a little way from the gate, I stumbled over something on the walk, and it was this. I thought it was only an old tea-pot at first, and was going to throw it into the street, but —"

"There's a law against throwing rubbish into the street," said the Captain, "but go on."

"Then," continued Joe, "I saw it was this."

"Hold on just there, sir! This story is pretty well put together, considering that you're a boy, but allow me to assure you that I don't believe a word of it. If you're an honest boy why didn't you bring the cup here at once?"

"I never saw the reward till this morning," said Joe faintly.

"You didn't, eh? Well, then I must beg leave to differ from you, and even if that were true, why didn't you let *us* know at once what

you had found? Ah — you see that if you were quite honest you'd have told us at once what a valuable thing you had found."

Joe's cheeks were flushed a bright crimson, and the tears trembled in his eyes at being talked to in this manner.

"Come," said the Captain in a softer tone, "better make a clean breast of it, and we shall let you off pretty easy this time, I guess."

"I wasn't honest, I know, said Joe, chokingly; "because when I first found it I wanted it for my own, and meant to sell it to get money to go to school with, and to buy books with, and to get me some clothes."

"Exactly," said his listener coolly; "now you talk like it."

"But finally I changed my mind — "

"About the time when you saw the reward," interrupted the Captain.

"And I thought that I hadn't ought to keep it — "

"Because you thought it would be a great deal easier to take a hundred in clear cash than to keep it and run the risk of being discovered. Yes, I think I can understand your feelings."

Joe gave up trying to say anything to this icy-toned and stony-hearted man, and two or three bright tears rolled down his cheeks, and fell upon the old jacket. Was this the reward which he was to get for vanquishing the Tempter?

"Come," said the Captain, "weep not, my boy. We're accustomed to tears, here. Now tell me honestly what you came here for this morning."

"To bring back the cup," said Joe.

"And to get a hundred dollars," added his inquisitor.

"No, sir! I didn't come for it. I wouldn't touch it!"

"I dare say," said the Captain, ironically; "you've no need of the filthy lucre, I suppose

Now, sonny," leaning forward and drawing Joe toward him by the shoulder, "listen to what I've got to say. I suppose you like to hear stories, and I'm going to tell you one."

This was said in such an icy tone, and there was such a disagreeable smile upon the speaker's face, that Joe was sure the story could be nothing good.

"Well, once there was a queer old gentleman who looked as if he might be Methuselah's great-grandfather, and one night — about sundown — he was walking along in a crowded street with a black valise in his hand. Now the black valise was open, for the old gent didn't make a point of having but one idea in his head at a time, and as he walked along, a little boy — well, about your size, I should say, — saw something shining in the bag; well, this little chap — now I think of it, he looked something like *you* — ran along beside the old gent, and when they were both in

a nice crowd, what does the little chap do but put his hand in the old gent's bag and pull out the shiny thing, which turns out to be a silver cup! But the best of the joke is, that when the little chap saw the big reward in the paper, he takes the cup, posts off to the Cap'n of Police, and makes believe that he picked the cup up on — Why, my stars!" cried the Captain, — affecting great surprise, — "I'll be shot if you ain't that very same little chap!"

Here a roar of laughter went up from the policemen about the stove, at the display of their chief's humor.

"Oh, sir!" cried Joe, in sudden terror, "do you mean to say that I *stole* it? — and out of the gentleman's valise, too?"

"Well," said the Captain, jocularly, "stole is a pretty hard word. It means State Prison, and lots of things, — and on the whole I guess it's a pretty big word for your shoulders; so we'll say that you abstracted it, though I be-

lieve that means pretty much the same thing in the long run."

Joe's face slowly turned very white, — not with a sense of guilt, for you know he was not guilty, — but because he knew that the stern, suspicious Captain would never credit his story, nor even listen to it.

"Well," observed the grim officer at last, "you needn't look so scared, — especially if you're such a nice, honest boy as you tell for. Honest boys don't get locked up, not that I've heard of. Now I've got some writing to do, and I'm going back to it, and I'm going to ask you one more question. Did you steal that cup, or did you find it?"

Joe looked up into the stern eyes that were watching him, and said firmly — "I found it."

"O pshaw!" cried the Captain, "I knew you would say so. Nixby, keep your eyes on the little chap!" and with this injunction he got up and went round the desk to his writing.

CHAPTER XI.

A PRISONER.

A prisoner, — not held by locks nor bolts, but simply by Policeman Nixby's eyes. A prisoner — not confined in cell or dungeon, but seated in a tolerably comfortable chair. He might easily have darted out of the door, for his jailer dropped asleep at least once in five minutes; but if he ran away they would certainly think him a thief, he thought. So he sat in the chair with a despairing heart, and listened to the scratch, scratch, of the Captain's pen, to the ticking of the clock, and the noise in the street. By-and-by the clock struck nine.

Time for school to commence, and his last day, too!

"Please can't I go?" he cried out on the impulse of the moment.

"No talking down there," said the Captain gruffly,—"you put me out. Nixby, wake up!—I've got a message here that I want taken down to the office."

That sleepy policeman got up, stretched himself and yawned, and walked up to his chief's desk.

"Here's a telegram for Darnleigh, to that old gent," said the officer; "Harvey stopped in this morning and told me that he'd gone home. Now see that it's sent through at once."

Nixby promised to do so, and here followed a whispered consultation of which Joe did not hear a word, though he was pretty sure that it concerned him. Then Nixby went to the Telegraph office with his message, and the Cap-

tain's pen began its scratching again. Oh, how long were the minutes! — how tiresome! how anxious to waiting Joe!

He did not imagine that the Captain meant to detain him any length of time, when he sat down; but the pointer went slowly around to ten without permission to go, and he began to be greatly troubled. What were they going to do with him? Were they going to prove him guilty of stealing? Oh, no! he thought, they can't do that! — they wouldn't try to do such a ridiculous thing!

But all his doubts were speedily solved, for a little after ten the Captain laid down his pen and came around to see how his prisoner was getting on.

"Well," said he, "I suppose I've got to do something with you, little chap. What shall it be?"

"Let me go to school," said Joe pleadingly, "for it's my last day."

"Your last day is it? Well, so much the better for you, eh? Boys like to have the last day of school come, I believe. But that's nothing to do with our business. We've got to settle this cup business, first. Come, if you'll confess how you got it I'll let you off pretty easy, — seeing that this is the first offence. But you must be spry! I can't waste time on you."

"There's nothing to confess, sir, — only that I found it on the side-walk," said Joe.

"Pshaw, boy! can't you see that I know better? Come, I'm disposed to be easy with you, but if you're going to stick it out in this manner, I'll put you through, and show no mercy! I suppose you know that I can have you arrested and locked up for stealing that cup, don't you?"

No, Joe did not know it, and the intelligence terrified him somewhat. "Oh, sir," said he, "how can I confess when I didn't do it?"

"Humph!" said the Captain impatiently, "you're one of the obstinate kind, I perceive. There's no use in wasting words on you! I never want to give a boy a bad character if I can help it, but if you won't take good advice it's none of my business. Tom!" he called out to one of the men at the stove, "take this boy down to the lock-up till we —"

But Joe interrupted with a shrill cry.

"O, Captain!" he cried, clinging to that gentleman, "don't have me locked up! don't! don't! Send for Harry, — he'll tell you I found it, sir!"

"Harry who?" asked the Captain, coldly.

"Harry Thorpe! — he was with me — he knows that I picked it up, and he'll tell you so."

"I dare say he would. I don't doubt but what there are a dozen rag-muffins in the street who would swear that they saw it drop

from the moon, if you wanted 'em to! But we don't take boy's evidence, as it happens."

Joe was in despair. The Captain was like an ice-berg, and there was no hope of melting his heart. As a last resort, he cried —

"Let me tell you where I found it, sir, and what kind of an old gentleman it was who passed us just before, sir!"

"Aha! so you *do* know about the old gentleman, after all?" said the Captain, sharply; "well, I thought you'd cross your tracks before all was over! Tom, take him off, will you? I'm sick of this."

Policeman Tom took Joe by the shoulder, and marched him towards the door. And as they were going out, the Captain cried —

"Try the lock-up a while, little chap, till you get ready to tell a straight story. Then I'd like to see you again!" and the door slammed behind them.

Tears rolled down Joe's cheeks as he thought

— "I shall be locked up, and Harry nor any one won't know what's taken me!" and grasping the policeman's arm, he cried entreatingly —

"O, please let me go and tell some one what's going to become of me! Do! — or send some one to tell Harry!"

"Well, that would be jolly!" observed Tom, laughing good-naturedly; "wouldn't you like to have me go and do the errand, and leave you here? You'd be here when I got back, I guess!"

"Indeed I would!" said Joe, earnestly,

"No, — 'twon't do, my lad, come along!"

But on the walk before them lay a fragment of envelope which some one had thrown down, in his pocket was a pencil, and on the curbstone was a ragged urchin. Quick as a lightning-flash the thought went through his mind: "*Send a note to Harry.*"

"O wait just *one* minute!" he pleaded,

JOE WRITING A NOTE TO HARRY. Page 185.

"till I can send a word to him. Just one minute!"

"Well, be spry then," said the policeman, and looked over the boy's shoulder while he wrote. Joe traced a few hurried words, then went up to the ragged urchin and said —

"Take this to the High school for me, will you? I'll give you a dime."

The boy nodded assent — eager to do the errand for that sum.

"Enquire for Harry Thorpe," said Joe, "don't give it to any one else. Here's your dime."

"Minute's up!" said Tom, — "come along, little chap," and away they went. But in all that long, wretched walk the boy found consolation in thinking — "Harry will know it! he'll get the note, and he won't let me be locked up long, for he'll tell them how 'twas."

He mentally blessed the old gentleman who gave him the dime, again and again; remem-

bering tnat but for that fortunate piece of silver he would have been unable to communicate his whereabouts to his friend.

"Oh," thought he gratefully, "there's some good men in the world, though the Captain isn't one!"

Down Thrace street — through the crowd which poured in at the four entrances of the square — and then they entered a quieter thoroughfare. Joe did not remember any of the blocks or shops to look familiar. Presently they stopped before a low, dingy building, with dark and gloomy windows, at the sight of which the boy trembled — they looked so prison-like.

"Come," said Policeman Tom, as they entered, "you needn't be alarmed. This isn't a bad place by any means. Why, here's a fire and benches, and plenty of company."

The fire was good enough, to be sure, but the company! Vile-faced men lounged on the

benches, and looked up moodily as they came in. There were half-dozen little boys huddled around the stove; some miserable creatures in the corner were dozing away the effects of a drunken carousal, and the air of the narrow room was almost suffocating with its burden of bad odors. Tom placed his charge on the end of one of the benches, and just then a squad of policeman arrived to convey the occupants of the lock-up to the police-court.

This was one comfort to poor Joe, for the room was nearly emptied of its wretched occupants, and he had some hope that they would not be sent back again. Policeman Tom departed with the rest, after good-naturedly telling his charge "not to fret nor get uneasy, for likely enough he'd get let out in the course of the day."

I do not think it very strange that when left to himself in the silence and gloom of the lock-up, Joe's heart began to grow despondent.

He suddenly felt very lonely and friendless, and not at all sure that Harry would help him. He remembered that his friend was vexed when last he left him, "and now," thought he, "he may say it's good enough for me. And perhaps he wouldn't want to claim acquaintance with a boy that's shut up for a thief, — he might be ashamed to! And besides, he may never get the note; the boy may keep the dime, and throw the note away, and I not be able to help myself!" Tortured by these thoughts his heart grew heavier and heavier, — especially after noon, when Harry failed to appear.

But Harry Thorpe was too true a friend to desert Joe because he had fallen into trouble. It was no fault of his that he did not go at once to his friend's help, nor was it exactly the fault of the errand-boy, who was more honest than Joe had feared. When, at nine o'clock the bell rang and school commenced, Harry was

somewhat surprised to find that Joe was not there; but thinking that he had been delayed at the Police Office, he went unconcernedly to his studies, expecting to see him enter the study-room at any moment. But to his astonishment, no Joe came. The forenoon wore away, intermission came, and he went home to dinner by the way of Thrace Street,—stopping to look in at the Police Office. But there was no one there—save a solitary policeman. Harry ran home, thinking that perhaps Joe had given up attending school on his last day, and thought to himself remorsefully—"I was cross to the poor fellow this morning. I didn't treat him right, and now may-be he thinks I'm angry at him, and don't want to spend his last day with me."

He ate but little dinner, and hurried back to school, hoping to find that his friend had arrived. But he was doomed to disappointment, for no Joe came all that long afternoon.

"Oh, dear!" thought he to himself, — "I'm afraid something has happened to him! and I don't even know where he lives!"

But as school was dismissed that night, and the boys were rushing out into the street, the mystery was solved. Ned Talmon laid his hand on Harry's shoulder, saying laughingly — "Look here, Harry, I've got something for you! What'll you give to see it?"

"Nothing to-night, Ned," said Harry soberly, "for I'm in a great hurry! I've got to — "

"Well, here it is; and let me tell you how I found it. You know I was late this morning — till half-past ten, almost — and as I was coming in, I met a ragged little chap, standing in the hall. As soon as he saw me he said — 'Be you Harry Thorpe?' 'Yes,' said I, just for fun, you know, and what did he do but put this bit of envelope into my hand, and ran off. It was such a little affair that I forgot all about it till this minute. Here 't is, and I hope it's

interesting!" and Ned laughingly hurried after the boys. Harry unfolded the bit of yellow paper in much astonishment, and you may imagine his surprise when he found these words:

"O, Harry! I'm arrested for stealing that cup, and they're taking me to the lock-up. *Help me.*

JOE.

Arrested! taken to the lock-up!—and for *stealing* the cup! Harry was so confused for a minute that he leaned against a friendly wall to collect his wits. Then he slowly read the note again. It was all clear, now, why Joe had not appeared at school. And almost a whole day had elapsed since the note was written! no wonder that Joe would think himself deserted by his friend!

He thrust the bit of paper into his pocket, and rushed off for the Police Office, intent

only on one object — that of proving his friend's innocence. The day had been chilly and cloudy, and night was falling fast, and gas-light began to flare out of the shop-windows across his path as he ran. He was but a very few minutes in reaching the Headquarters, and burst in upon the officers there like a whirlwind.

"Whew!" cried the Captain, looking up from his papers, "what's coming?".

It was a well-dressed, good-looking boy, or that gentleman might have ordered him to be shown out. But as it was, the Captain sat and listened — looking amused.

"Oh, sir," cried Harry, excitedly, "he's just as innocent as he can be! He didn't steal it, sir, indeed he didn't! I saw him pick it up!" and here was obliged to stop for want of breath.

"You d l, eh?" very coolly; "well, before

you go any further I should be happy to know who you are talking about."

These frigid words cooled Harry's ardor somewhat.

"I mean Joe Gray," said he, "whom you have arrested for stealing a cup; but he didn't steal it! — he picked it up on the sidewalk in front of my house. I know he didn't, and oh, won't you let him go, sir?"

"Whose boy are you?" queried the Captain.

"Mr. Thorpe's, — 20, Heath Avenue," replied Harry.

"You are, eh? Well, what has such a smart boy as you to do with such a little ragmuffin as this Joe?"

"He isn't a rag-muffin!" said Harry, indignantly; "he's a real good boy, and you've no business to shut him up, because he didn't steal the cup, — he found it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" was all the reply the Chief of Police made.

"But it's true!" said Harry, very indignantly, "and you've no right to shut up innocent people. He found the cup on the sidewalk, only a little way from our gate. I can show you the very spot, sir, and you've no right to shut him up, anyhow!"

The Captain admired this belligerent spirit, and was not at all displeased.

"Well," said he still smiling, "suppose that all you say is true, — what are you going to do about it?"

Of course Harry could not tell, but he looked as if he would like to put the Captain in Joe's place.

"Please won't you let him go, sir?" he pleaded, a few minutes after, going around the desk into the grim Captain's very presence; "it will be dreadful to have him shut up in

that horrid lock-up all night! Oh, if you will, sir, I know papa will be responsible for him."

"Humph!" said the Captain, — "I've heard enough. In the station-house master Joe will have to stay to-night — unless the owner of the cup should happen to make his appearance and let him go; but that is impossible, as the old gent happens to be about one hundred miles off to-night. So you've sense enough to see that I can't do it — not even to accommodate you, my fine fellow. Better take it cool, and let him stay there; 'twon't hurt him a particle, and about to-morrow afternoon — if I'm not mistaken — the old gent will fetch around after his cup, and then you can have a chance at him. But remember, if the old fellow should take a notion to prosecute, master Joe has got to prove his innocence."

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRISONER'S FRIENDS.

HARRY turned away from the Captain with a very sober face, but was not discouraged.

"I'll go home and see papa!" he said to himself; "papa can make them do differently, I know. If anything can be done, he can do it," and with this thought he hurried toward the door.

"Call again!" cried the Captain, good-naturedly, — "we shall be happy to see you any time."

But Harry did not wait to reply, and ran out into the chilly street. Gas-lights now were flaring everywhere. He met crowds of

people hurrying homeward from their labor or pleasure, and then chanced to remember that his father might yet be at his office, as it was rather too early for supper. He stopped short and turned about. "I'll go down to the office first, and see," he said to himself, "and then I shan't have my walk home for nothing!"

Running and walking by turns, he was not long in leaving Thrace street behind, and his father's place of business was just round the corner, — fronting the square. Up the stone steps he ran — into the great salesroom where the gas was just being lit.

"O, Weston," said he anxiously, to a spruce clerk, who. was looking over a great pile of goods which lay upon the counter, — "has papa gone home?"

"Ah, you, is it, Master Harry!" said Weston, with a very polite bow, — "well, I guess you'll find him in the counting-room yet. I haven't seen him go."

Whereat Harry ran joyfully to the office-door and pushed it open. Good fortune! — there was no one there but his father, and he was putting on his rubbers preparatory to going home. The first inkling which Mr. Thorpe had of his son's presence was at finding two arms about his neck and at hearing a voice say —

"O papa! I'm *so* glad you're here."

"Why, Harry, my son," said Mr. Thorpe; "what brought you here? Why, I was just thinking of you at this moment as comfortable at home — eating supper with mamma and Sophy, while poor I had got to walk all the long way in the cold wind!"

"Oh, but you see, papa, I'm in trouble! I didn't know what to do, so I came to you! Will you help me?"

"Certainly, Harry: but I must know what it is first."

"Yes, papa; you see there's a poor boy at

school — a friend of mine — and he found a cup the other night in front of our house, — a splendid silver —"

"What, the one that is advertised?" interrupted his father.

"Yes, sir; and when he saw the reward and found where it belonged — that was this morning — he carried it straight to the Police Office, and oh, they've arrested him for stealing it and locked him up in the station-house! But he's innocent, papa! — he's innocent! — and I want you to get him out."

"But are you quite sure?"

"Of what, papa?"

"That he's innocent, — that he didn't steal the cup."

"O yes! yes — I know when he found it! I know *where* he found it. I can show you the very spot, papa, and Joe wouldn't steal to save his life!"

"But why didn't he carry the cup in before?"

"He never saw the reward till this morning, papa, and — and —"

"What, Harry?"

"He is so poor and wants to go to school so badly that — that at first he wanted to keep this cup and sell it to get the money. He's dreadful poor, papa!"

"I dare say. But he had some thoughts of being dishonest, it seems."

"Yes, — he wanted to learn so bad! and — and — I tempted him, papa," said Harry, with downcast eyes.

"*You*, my son?" said Mr. Thorpe, surveying his boy sternly.

"Yes — papa —" chokingly, "I loved him, and I wanted him to go to school — and my spending-money was all gone, and — and — I tried to have him sell the cup, — he was such a

dear friend; but he was better than I papa, for he wouldn't sell it, and when he saw the reward he carried it right to the office, — not to get the money, though, for he wouldn't touch a bit of it because he had been thinking of doing wrong."

A deep silence followed, in which the little French clock on the wall ticked noisily. Then —

"You did very wrong, Harry!" came from Mr. Thorpe's lips. The boy's chin quivered.

"I should never have thought you capable of tempting a poor boy like that; a poor boy who had everything to drive him to the sin without your influence. He must have had a hard fight with temptation, — with his friend leading him on."

"Oh — papa!" and Harry burst into tears. His father made no attempt to soothe him till his sobs grew less. Then he drew him upon his knee, saying —

"There, you've cried enough, Harry. I'm not angry with you, by any means. I'm only sorry that you did such a wicked thing as to tempt your friend to keep what was not his own. I'm afraid that of the two, yours was the greater sin in God's sight."

"Yes, papa, though I didn't think what I was doing then."

"Now what do you want me to do, Harry?" said the father, stroking his son's hair affectionally, and feeling very happy to find that his boy had such a warm heart.

"To get Joe out of that dreadful lock-up, papa. He'll be so lonesome and deserted there. And I know that that cross Captain thinks him guilty!"

"Have you been there?" asked Mr. Thorpe, getting up and locking drawers and safe.

"Yes, and he is *such* a disagreeable man! He said that Joe couldn't be let out till — till the old gentleman came back who owned the cup."

"Well, Harry, we'll go and see about it," said the father, putting on his overcoat; 'mamma and Sophy will wonder what has taken us, I supppse, but we'll try to spend a few minutes with the Captain. Come," and they left the counting-room. Weston saw father and son pass out, and thought to himself —"Master Harry carries out a shorter face than he carried in. He's been getting the right side of the old gentleman."

Through the wind they went — straight to Headquarters. The Captain — very suave and polite to the rich merchant — informed them that Joe was strongly suspected of stealing the cup from the old gentleman's valise; that the charge was quite a serious one, and must be investigated; that he should be most happy to accommodate, but really, under the circumstances, he couldn't think of letting the boy go. He must stay till the owner of the cup arrived, and if *he* chose to let him go, why, all well and

good; but till that time he must remain a prisoner.

"You hear what he says, Harry?" said Mr. Thorpe. Yes, Harry heard, and was despondent.

"But, papa," said he, an instant after, "why can't he be shut up here, instead of in that dreadful lock-up?"

"Yes," said Mr. Thorpe, "can't you confine him in a better place than that, Captain?"

That worthy meditated a few moments, then said —

"Well, as a particular favor to you, Mr. Thorpe, I'll send down and have the boy brought up here. He can lodge tolerably comfortable a night or two I should imagine."

"O good!" cried Harry, "and send for him now, won't you, Captain?"

"Yes," said the officer, good-humoredly, "I'll send for him now. Tom, you sleepy head, go down to the lock-up and fetch up that

little chap you took down this morning. Stir yourself!"

"Now Harry," said Mr. Thorpe, "we'll go home to supper. Mamma and—"

"O papa," interrupted the son, "mayn't I stay till—till Joe comes? You can go home to tea and leave me here, and after I've seen him I'll come just as fast as I can run."

"And eat your supper all alone, boy?" said the father, smiling.

"Yes, papa; or go without it if you'll let me stay."

"Stay then, Harry," said Mr. Thorpe, and thanking the Captain for his kindness, went out.

Now this Captain of Police had taken a fancy to the merchant's son. He liked him for his perseverance, and for what—in the Captain's vocabulary—was termed "spunk." And not being very busy, he left the desk and came out to the chair in which Harry sat.

"Had your own way in spite of me, didn't you?" said he, laughing; "well, I like to see a boy stick to a thing, even if I do come out second-best. Now I really wish, for your sake, that this little chap was innocent."

"He *is* innocent," said Harry; "do you think I'd lie about it?"

"Why — no — but you might be deceived yourself, you see," said the Captain.

"How can I?" said Harry; "I saw him two minutes after he picked it up. I know the very spot in the walk where it was found, — right by a little step where an old gentleman who was coming up the street stumbled. I think he lost it out of his valise."

"How could that be?" asked the Captain, feigning ignorance of all the particulars.

"Why, sir," said Harry, "the bag was open! — and the old man acted as if he were crazy."

"Well, he's right there," thought the Cap-

tain; then aloud — "What kind of an old gentleman was it?"

"Oh, sir, a queer one! he had on the drollest old cloak and hat you ever saw, and carried a white-headed cane."

"That's the very man, sure enough!" thought the Captain in surprise; then again: "You say he stumbled. What did he stumble over? — and give me all the particulars, if you please. Your story sounds plausible."

Harry took heart, and related all the circumstances, — how Joe and he were standing at the gate in the twilight; how the old gentleman who was coming up the walk failed to perceive the little step and consequently stumbled and fell, and all those particulars with which we are already familiar.

"Well," said the Captain cautiously, "that's a pretty smooth story, and I'll think about it. One can't — "

The opening door cut short the last remark

which that gentleman was about to make, Policeman Tom entered, and Joe was with him. The Captain missed the boy at his side, looked about, and saw two lads standing by the door, — both of them very silent.

"Oh, ho!" said he, "you've got back little chap, have you? Come up here and warm you, sir."

"Yes, Joe, come and warm you," said Harry, tenderly, "you're 'most froze in this wind.' And with this he led his friend up to the gloomy stove, gave him the chair in which he had been sitting, and hovered about him — acting the part of Good Samaritan generally. "O, Joe!" said he in a whisper, leaning on the arm-chair, "I didn't desert you, indeed I didn't! I only got your note to-night — almost dark. But the Captain has promised — though he can't let you out, that you shall stay in this nice warm room all night, and to morrow the old gentleman is coming, and

then we'll have everything all right. Papa will help, Joe! — *he* can do it."

Long he lingered about his friend, offering such consolation and encouragement as was most grateful to Joe's troubled heart. The Captain looked on amused and smiling.

"Well, little chap," said he at last, addressing Joe, "what'll you take for that friend of yours? I'd like such a one to help *me*, when I get into trouble. Come, I'll pay high for him."

But Joe was deaf to this bit of pleasantry, — having ears only for Harry's words. At last, Harry remembered that he must not stay late, and bidding his friend good-night, and promising to come again early in the morning, he ran home very buoyant-hearted.

The telegram which the Captain sent flashing over the rivers reached Darnleigh, of course, long before Mr. Pendleton. Imagine

then, the old gentleman's astonishment, when, on reaching home, he found this bit of news waiting for him:

"WAYNETHORPE, FRIDAY MORN.

Jno. Pendleton—Sir—Cup all right. Come on and prove property.

CAPT. POLICE.

At first he could not believe his eyes. Why, he had left Waynethorpe that very morning, and here was a telegram which had been waiting six hours, so old Kate informed him.

"Ah, my good Kate," said he, thrusting the despatch into his waistcoat pocket, "I care not for this cup. Give me my supper directly, for I am nearly famished. Thou knowest not what I have endured these three days."

Doubtless the old gentleman thought he knew his own heart, but you will presently see that he did not. Old Kate made all haste,

and soon supper was spread upon a little table in the cabinet. Mr. Pendleton sniffed the odorous steam of the tea, and rubbed his hands contentedly together, and looked around him upon the familiar walls with an air of the keenest enjoyment, and straightway fell into such a delicious reverie as he had not enjoyed before in three days at least, — the whole sum and substance of which was that "There's no place like Home."

In this happy frame of mind he took his seat at the little table, and between alternate sips of tea, mouthfuls of bread-and-butter, and snatches at the Tacigraphon — which he held in his lap — came at last to be in a very comfortable state of both mind and body. And when tea was carried away, and he was seated in the dear easy-chair once more, with the great volume open before him, you will not be surprised to find that his antiquarian spirit came slowly back to him. He began to lose

sight of past discomforts in his present happiness, and to think — between the paragraphs of the Tacigraphon — that the silver cup was a little too good to be lost after all.

"I will not be so hasty," said he to himself, after the quarter part of the evening had flown; "I will think over the matter a little, and see what is best. To have to make another journey will be bad, but I need stay but one night and the time will pass speedily. I will think of it!" (You see the old gentleman had forgotten the day of the week, and was entirely unconscious that he should have to stay over the Sabbath if he went. But this absence of mind was most fortunate for poor Joe Gray, for had the old gentleman had his wits about him he would never have undertaken the journey with the prospect of having to make such a long stay.)

The result of his deliberations you may well guess. He went. And the train reached

Waynethorpe in safety, and the old gentleman got out at the bustling station in the pleasant afternoon sunshine, to find Mr. Harvey waiting for him. That gentleman could not refrain from smiling at seeing his old friend back so soon.

"Why," said he, "I thought you were disgusted with Waynethorpe entirely! I doubted whether you would really answer the summons."

At which, a little smile actually tugged at the down-curved wrinkles of the old man's face, and he said —

"Thou knowest I am but a foolish old man, friend Harvey."

Then a cab was called, and they trundled off toward the Police Headquarters, — the old gentleman quite in ecstacies at the prospect of speedily beholding his treasure again.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW POSSESSIONS.

AT the Headquarters that afternoon, when the cab rolled up to the door, there were the Captain, the usual amount of policemen around the stove, and Joe and Harry. Harry's father had given him permission to spend the afternoon with his friend, and the two boys had long been anxiously waiting the old gentleman's arrival.

An anxious waiting it could not but be, for the two friends had reason to fear that Mr. Pendleton would insist on having Joe tried for theft. And now, when the sound of the cab-driver's "whoa!" was heard without, Harry whispered — "Keep up good courage, Joe, and

it'll all be right. We shall know it all in a few minutes."

The door opened, and in walked Mr. Harvey, followed by the old gentleman in the ancient cloak and queer hat, — the identical garments in which the boys had seen him dressed.

"Yes! that's he! — that's the very one!" cried Harry in a whisper to the Captain; "I should know him anywhere. And there's the black valise and white-headed cane."

"Good afternoon Mr. Pendleton," said the Captain, bowing blandly; "happy to see you, sir! — very happy indeed. Hope you had a comfortable journey."

"Quite tolerable," replied the old gentleman, somewhat impatiently; his eyes rambling searchingly around the room. But the Captain was in no hurry to gratify his curiosity.

"You've had to travel about considerably of late," he continued; "hope so much jolting and jarring won't hurt you!"

"No! no!" cried the old man, hurriedly, "I'm quite well. I want to see the cup, — my cup, sir!"

Just then the door opened and Mr. Thorpe came in. Harry went and stood by his side, to get a renewal of the promise of aid in case it was needed; and at this moment the Captain brought forward the treasure from some hidden corner of his desk, and placed it upon the ledge of one of the broad windows.

Down went the antiquary's cane and valise with a clatter, and the quaint cloak swung off to one side, and rushing forward the old gentleman grasped his cup with an exclamation of pleasure. Fondly he gazed upon its glittering work — his eyes twinkling with delight — peered into its burnished hollow, and rubbed the ancient *Z* with his fingers. Then he put it down, took two or three little steps backward, viewed it a moment from this new point of view, rushed to the window again to fondle it

and breathe upon it, and behave in a manner that was altogether very ludicrous. The Captain laughed aloud, and every one smiled but Joe.

"O, you beauty!" cried the old gentleman, admiringly; "saw you ever such silver-work, gentlemen? — such pitted stems! such veined leaves! such massy knots of fruit! — and this frost-work was done by no other than a cunning workman. Alas! it was an evil day when I lost it."

"Evil for more than one," thought poor Joe to himself, as he watched the speaker's performances. And while Mr. Pendleton was making such show of ecstasy, Harry stole across the room to whisper in Joe's ear —

"Keep up good courage! he don't look like a cross man at all, come to get him where it's light."

Mr. Pendleton was certainly far from being cross at that moment. Very likely — had it

been possible — his face would have shown with smiles and good-natured dimples, and as it was he looked quite mild and benevolent.

"Well," said the Captain, shortly, "havn't we been expeditious? The reward was offered only day before yesterday, and now here's your cup — safe and sound."

The old gentleman nodded assent, and presently asked — "Who got the reward?"

"Well," said the Captain, "there's no one got it yet. You see, sir, we've had a little difficulty in the matter. The cup was brought in yesterday morning by that little chap sitting by the stove, and we couldn't quite clear matters up till you came."

Mr. Pendleton gave Joe an indifferent glance from under his shaggy eye-brows, and then turned fondly to his cup again. It was very clear that he wanted to talk upon no other subject. But the Captain of Police was intent upon settling up matters at once.

"And, sir," continued he politely, "if you and these gentleman present will be so good as to be seated, we'll try to smooth things out a little. What do you say, gentleman?"

Mr. Thorpe and Mr. Harvey signified their assent by taking seats, and the old gentleman could do no less. He dropped into a seat by Harry and his father. And being all seated, the Captain, eager for business, said —

"Now, gentlemen, we'll go ahead. Come, master Joe, now for your story. Stand up, and give us all the particulars, and don't be afraid of anybody. All the particulars, remember. Mr. Pendleton, please notice whether his statement agrees with what you remember of the affair. Go ahead, Joe!"

Joe stood up by his chair, and commenced his story. His voice trembled somewhat at first, but getting used to the unwonted silence, and receiving many encouraging glances from Harry, he was at last enabled to recite the

circumstances clearly and plainly. And the Captain interrupted not once. When Joe sat down, he said —

"Now master Harry, let's hear your account. Give us all the particulars!"

Harry stood up by his father's side, and commenced his account of the affair, and you may be sure the Captain kept both ears open to find some discrepancy in their statements. In the midst of the narrative he interrupted with —

"Goodness! look at the old gentleman, will you? — I'll be shot if he isn't sound asleep! — and all these things being told for his benefit!"

Yes, the combined influence of fatigue, and the warm fire before which he sat, had made the old gentleman's head droop on his breast, and there he sat — entirely unconscious of what was being done. The Captain looked half-angry, half-amused.

"I declare!" said he, biting his lip, "I've a good mind to throw up the whole business, and let the old gent guess whether his cup was lost or stolen!"

But Mr. Thorpe interposed, with —

"No! go on. This boy's character must be cleared now. If Mr. Pendleton doesn't care, I do. I insist that the investigation go on!"

Harry pressed his father's hand gratefully for these words, and continued his narrative after Mr. Harvey had waked his sleepy friend. When Harry had done, and it was found that the boys' stories agreed perfectly, the Captain said,

"So far, it's all clear, I think. Now, Mr. Pendleton, let us hear your account of the matter. Give us all the particulars."

But before he had time to speak, the door opened, and there entered — Jumper! Not Jumper the good-natured, easy carpenter, but

Jumper red-faced and cross, and much the worse for liquor.

"Oh, you little villian!" said he, angrily, marching straight up to Joe, "this is what it's come to, is it? This is the pay for taking a good-fur-nothin' scamp out o' the street and bringin' him up in an honest family, eh? Yes, in the bosom of an honest family! with plenty to eat and drink — even tho' it took victuals out of the mouths of our own young uns? This is the pay is it?" trying to get Joe by the collar.

But the Captain got up and thrust Jumper into a chair, saying —

"Who be you, sir?"

"Who be I?" said Jumper, somewhat startled, — "why, I'm Thomas Jumper, and that little villian there in that chair has been nourished in my family — viper! and now he's been stealing, they tell me, and bringin' a bad name onto a poor man like I be, and I — "

"No more!" said the Captain, in his most frigid tones; "do you sit here till I give you leave to get up, and if you make a breath of noise I'll —" The threat was left unfinished, but enough was implied by the tone to keep Jumper silent. Then the Captain went back to business, saying — "Now we'll hear you, Mr. Pendleton."

Jumper's sudden appearance had wrought one good, at any rate, for it had thoroughly aroused the old gentleman from his drowsiness. He looked at Joe, then at the listeners ranged around, and enquired —

"Is that boy charged with stealing the cup?" pointing to Joe.

The Captain looked disgusted.

"Of course he is!" he answered tartly; "are you on earth, or where, sir? Excuse me, gentlemen, but really I never saw such an absent-minded person! This boy, Mr. Pendleton, was held for stealing your cup, and for

the last three-quarters of an hour we've been trying to find out something about it. I've about made up my mind that he isn't guilty, after all, and —"

"Humph!" said the old gentleman, "I know he isn't! Does he say that he found it?"

"Yes," answered the Captain.

"Then of course he did," said Mr. Pendleton, "and I suppose you've paid him the reward. He looks as if he needed it, — poor little boy."

The Captain looked from one to the other of the gentlemen in despair.

"I really believe the old chap's crazy!" said he, aside to Mr. Harvey; "at any rate I can't do anything with him. I give it up!"

"Well." said Mr. Thorpe, "are you satisfied of Joe's innocence?"

"Well — yes," said the Captain. "I'm quite certain that he found it, and I congrat-

ulate the old gentleman, here, that it fell into so honest a pair of hands. Look here, little chap," turning to Joe, "didn't I tell you that innocent folks didn't get shut up, and hasn't it come true?"

Just here, Jumper, who had been edging unseen towards the stove, came out again upon Joe.

"Needn't think ye can come back to our house again, for ye can't. We're honest folks, and don't have no thieves around us. Don't ye come there, for we won't let ye in. Mrs. Jumper said, says she — 'He can't have another mouthful nor another lodgin' under this roof!' and I say so too. We cast you off! won't have you! don't you come with us!"

You may imagine how Joe felt to be thus disowned by one who had befriended him so long.

"O, Jumper!" said he brokenly, "don't say it! I didn't do it, — they'll tell you so!"

"Don't care nothin' 'bout that, we've done with ye forever. Ye aint a-going to get another meal nor nothin' to our house, and there's the end on't!" cried the carpenter, very wrathfully; and then seeing that the Captain was again about to interfere, he left the Office. Joe being thus left suddenly homeless, wept somewhat. What should he do? Where could he go?

Harry left his chair and came around to take Joe's hands, and whisper — "Now don't cry one bit, for there's no need of it. If there's no other way, I know papa will take care of you, and oh, wouldn't it be glorious, Joe, to live together, — you and I?"

Of course it would; but Joe had not much faith that it would be thus. Mr. Pendleton, who had been a silent observer of all that had passed, now asked —

"Whose boy is that?" pointing to Joe.

"Well," replied the Captain soberly, "he

doesn't seem to belong to anybody, just now. That's what's the matter."

"Ah?" said the old gentleman, "well, that's funny. Come here, my lad."

Joe obeyed, — not without feeling somewhat awed by the old man's strange looks and appearance, and the gentlemen and Harry looked on in surprise.

"Gray eyes, lightish hair, thin face," mused Mr. Pendleton, quite as if he had no listeners; "not exactly what my Willie would have been, but then — he's something like. What's your name, my lad?"

"Joe."

"Joe, eh? Humph! that isn't so pretty as Willie, — not half so pretty. How wonld you like to be called Willie, my boy?"

Joe's eyes opened to their widest extent with amazement, as did Harry's; while the gentlemen exchanged glances, as much as to say — "He *is* a little crazed.

But you see, they knew nothing of his little Willie. How should they? but presently they found that there "was method in his madness," after all.

"Well, continued Mr. Pendleton, turning Joe round and round as if he were some old relic whose merits he was bound to find, — "my Willie would have been taller than this. it seems to me, but — Could you feed doves, think you?" he suddenly asked.

"Yes, sir," said Joe, looking beseechingly at his friends.

"What's the old fellow driving at, anyhow?" queried the Captain, aside.

"Wait," said Mr. Harvey, "and I suspect we shall see, presently."

A dead silence fell upon the company, in which Mr. Pendleton buried his face in his hands, and mused. Presently he looked up and actually smiled in spite of the rigid wrinkles, and with this unusual expression upon his aged countenance he said —

"Will you go and be my Willie — my boy?"

A startled "O–h–h–!" escaped Harry's lips, in spite of himself, and the gentlemen were quite as much astonished, though they had better control over their feelings.

"I'll be shot," said the Captain, "if the cup business hasn't gone ahead of everything, from first to last, that ever I heard of!"

What could Joe do? The old gentleman was looking with his keen eyes straight into his, and all were waiting for his answer. He did not quite dare to look around at Harry, and after a few minutes of silent hesitation, he said in a low voice — "Yes, sir — I'll go."

"Bless you!" said Mr. Pendleton, with a fervor that was new to him; "now I've got a little boy again, — *my* boy! my Willie."

"O papa!" said Harry, in a whisper, "did you ever hear of such a thing?"

"No, my son," said Mr. Thorpe, smiling at

the oddity of the whole affair, "I never heard of such a thing before, but it's a very nice thing to hear of, I think."

"Goodness!" cried the Captain, aside, "I'll be bound the old chap is sharper than the whole of us, now! Don't you see, he's got cup, reward, boy and all? Ha! ha! ha!—" then to Mr. Pendleton—"Better have some papers made out, sir. Have it all straight with the law, you know."

"No, no!" said the old gentleman, shaking his head vigorously, "I call all these gentlemen to witness that I adopt this boy as my own,—as my son, and heir to all my property."

"Good for you!" cried the Captain, enthusiastically; this to Joe—"Now, little chap, see what a good thing 'twas that I held on to you! Why, if I'd have given you the reward you'd have run off and spent it, and there'd ha' been the end of it; but now you've got a

nice home, a bran new father, and everything to match! Hurrah, Master Joe Pendleton!"

"No, no!" said the old man hurriedly, "call him Willie! Willie!"

At which the gentlemen looked surprised, but thought it only one of the whims of which the old head was so full. And thus Joe was adopted, and suddenly brought into possession of a home and a father.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

THE company at the Police Office now broke up and went to their respective homes, — Mr. Pendleton and his two new possessions going home with Mr. Harvey, and the Captain went back to his desk and papers exclaiming —

"Well, I never saw such a fizzle of a case as this has been — never! Between the old gent and those two boys, it's been a pretty muddle from beginning to end."

Yet when the grim Captain had got fairly at work at his papers, he stopped to think over the whole matter again and to laugh over it

for the tenth or twentieth time. And at heart he was really pleased with Joe's good fortune.

As for Harry Thorpe, he did not know whether to laugh or cry; but concluded at last to consider it a very fortunate circumstance. As for Joe himself, he was at a loss what to say or do, or to think, even. He stood in awe of the old gentleman, and was not at all sure that he could even like him.

Mr. Pendleton, for a wonder, was quite resigned to staying over the Sabbath, and complained not of inconvenience or fatigue. He followed Joe with his eyes wherever the boy went, and it was not without some difficulty that he got permission to go and bid his friend Harry good-bye on the evening before their departure. But just as Joe was going down the steps of Mr. Harvey's residence, whom should he meet but Harry? — and found that his friend had come to bid farewell to *him*.

"Come," said Joe, as soon as they had wel-

comed each other, "let's go in. I want you to see my new — father."

"No," said Harry, "stay here, Joe. I don't want to see him, for somehow he makes me feel dreadful uncomfortable. I don't like to look at him."

To which Joe replied, smiling—

"I didn't like to look at him yesterday, but to-day he seems different to me, somehow. And oh! he isn't cross a bit, Harry."

"Isn't he?" said Harry, looking incredulous, "why, I shouldn't think he could help it, — he looks so! But if he's good to you, I'm glad. O, Joe, aren't you sorry to go?"

The sudden mist which gathered in Joe's eyes was a truthful answer. He turned away his head and looked down the street, while his lips quivered. And though Harry was just as sorry too, he was fain to offer consolation in this wise:

"It'll be such a nice home for you, Joe,"

said he bravely ; "and you can go to school now as much as you like, and have everything you want ; and I think just as papa does that it's a splendid chance for you."

"I suppose it is," said Joe, with an effort; "at any rate I mean to do my best, and try to like the old gentleman."

"And then," continued Harry, "you can come back here sometimes, and see us all, and I can come and see you! And then there's a comfort in letters, anyhow, for we can write then as often as we like, can't we, Joe?'

"Y–e–s," said Joe, "but that won't be like seeing you!"

Harry's eyes twinkled at this, and he said —

"What'll you give to carry me with you, Joe?"

"Carry you with me? why, I don't understand! How could I take you with me, Harry?" looking doubtful.

"O, there's a way! Can't you guess?

Well, if you can't, look here," and Harry drew something from his overcoat pocket.

Joe came close to his friend, and saw a neat little morocco case.

"Now if you can't guess," said Harry, "you must find out yourself!" and with this he put the dainty square into his friend's hands. Joe eagerly opened it, and found —Harry himself! — the same brave, merry head, the same curling locks and frank eyes, whose counterparts were just now sparkling with pleasure.

"O," cried Joe, under his breath, "it's *you!*" and could not look at it enough

"Well," said Harry, at length, "now can't you take me with you, Joe? Haven't you room?"

Joe looked up, — astonished.

"Why – you – you – don't mean it's mine?"

"Yes I do. It's yours, to do what you like with!"

"But," said Joe, "what will your father and mother say? I'm afraid they — "

"Pshaw, Joe! papa gave it to me himself to give to you, and he's going to get another. Wasn't it good of him?"

"Yes, it was too good of him. I don't deserve such a nice picture, Harry, and the only one he had of you!"

"Oh, that's nothing, for he can get another easy enough, and you're just as welcome to it as you can be!" said Harry; "and now if I only had one of you, we'd be even. But I can wait, I guess, till you have time to get one in Darnleigh."

Here Joe chanced to look up and saw Mr. Pendleton watching them at one of the front windows. Harry's eyes followed his friend's, and discovered the old gentleman too.

"I declare!" he exclaimed, "I didn't suspect he was watching us. What stern eyes he's got. O, I hope he'll be good to you, Joe! and if he isn't, don't stay with him a day, for you can have a home with us. I really believe

if the old gentleman hadn't spoken just as he did, yesterday, papa would have had you lived with us; and oh, I wish it could have been so!"

Joe secretly wished so too, but said —

"I guess it's best as it is, Harry. I'll be happy, I know."

"Of course, Joe! — but see how dark it's getting, and the bells are just beginning to ring for evening service. I must go! — papa won't like me to stay any longer. Now —"

He meant to say good-bye, but Joe looked around just then at him so wistful and so sad, that the words died away and were not uttered; and giving his friend's hand a farewell squeeze, Harry ran off homeward as fast as he could go. Joe lingered on the pavement and watched the hurrying figure till it disappeared in the dusk, and yet when it was quite out of sight he still tarried, watching, — the heavy clamor of the bells filling his ears. Then, with his precious picture in his jacket-pocket he went in.

The next morning Mr. Harvey's household were early astir, for there was something to be done to get the two journeyers safely on their way. Joe had to be clothed in new garments from head to foot, and nice, warm clothes they were which the old gentleman ordered. In a well-fitting suit, with cap, overcoat, and boots, Joe looked another person, and Mr. Pendleton was better pleased with his appearance than ever.

And when the needed change in his appearance had been made, they started on this bright Monday morning for Darnleigh, — the old gentleman bearing off his new possessions in triumph. We, who have been over the road before, need see nothing of them till they arrive safely at the end of their journey. Here Mr. Pendleton left the depot, — the cup safe in his valise, and his other treasure walking beside him, — and proceeded to walk homeward in as staid and orderly manner as

any one. Joe's eyes, you may be sure, keenly surveyed the ancient-looking dwelling at which they stopped. Mr. Pendleton led the way straight to the front entrance, and rang a peal which I'll warrant the echoing rooms had not heard before in many a year, and which brought old Kate in great hurry and dismay to see what was the matter.

"Lawk, master!" she cried, when she had succeeded in unfastening and opening the unused door, "is it you?" and stared at him as if she thought he had gone crazy.

"Yes, yes, my good Kate!" said the old gentleman gleefully, "it's me, and I've brought you company. Here's my boy — my Willie, — come to live with me. Isn't it a nice boy, — and don't you remember my little Willie, good Kate?"

"Lawk, yes, master!" said the old housekeeper wonderingly, "but he's been dead this thirty year!"

Whereat the old gentleman rubbed his forehead confusedly, and said —

"Yes, — thirty-four years ago; but here's another Willie come to live with the old man, and feed the doves, and run about, and make the house pleasant. Isn't it a nice boy, Kate?"

The housekeeper made a courtesy by way of reply, and led the way into the cabinet where the afternoon sunshine was streaming in, and made the room look tolerably cheerful to Joe's wondering eyes. Then she hurried off to the kitchen to bring them some refreshment, whispering into the darkness of her cupboard, as a great secret, that — "She believed master had gone clean crazy this time!"

I think Joe began to think so, too, when he saw how strangely the old gentleman acted some of the time; and that first afternoon he was home-sick somewhat, for which we cannot blame him much. But as days passed away,

and he saw more and more of his benefactor, and filled a warmer place in the old man's heart, I think he understood him better than any one had ever done before. He even began to like the — But all this you shall have in words of his own:

"DARNLEIGH, FEB. 5th, 18—.

DEAR HARRY:

Your letter, written two nights after I left Waynethorpe, got to me safely, and oh! you can't know how glad I was to get it; for you see, I was dreadful homesick then, and almost *starving* to hear from what was home a little while ago. Now I've so much to tell you that I don't know where to begin first, but I'll go clear back to the afternoon when we arrived here, and tell you all about it, as long as my paper will hold out. (Did you ever see such funny yellow old paper as this? Mr. P. got it for me out of a drawer in the book-case, and I

guess it's twenty or thirty years old from what he said about it.)

Well, we got to Darnleigh depot safe and sound, and walked up here. I was surprised to find what a great house it was he lived in, and it made me homesick the first thing, — it looked so gloomy! — and then we had such a time getting in at the front-door. It hadn't been opened before — so the old house-keeper told me afterwards — in many years, and it was well stuck together, I can tell you! Why he went in at that door I can't imagine.

Well, after we got in, old Kate (his house-keeper) led us into a room which is called the cabinet, and as the sun shone in it was pleasant a little. It is crammed so full of books that there's hardly room to get about without stumbling over 'em, and in here we had our supper — he and . I — and when we were through that what do you think he did? Oh! you can't think how astonished I was, and I

didn't understand it at all then, but I do now. He took a piece of bread off the plate and said — 'Come, Willie, it's time to feed the doves.' I didn't know what to say, but he got up from the table and opened the window, and said — 'Here they are! come quick!' and I looked out and there were great flocks of the prettiest doves you ever saw, right under the window! 'Give me the bread,' said I, 'and I'll feed them.' But he said — 'No! no! you must sit in the window to do it! Get up and scatter the crumbs about, and see how they'll chatter!' So I got up in the window-seat and sat there, and threw crumbs about to the birds, and called them; while he sat in his arm-chair and nodded and laughed, and said — 'That's right! that's right! they know it's you, Willie!' O, Harry, I can't tell you how strangely it made me feel to hear him say that, and look at me so! I certainly thought he was crazy.

But the other day the housekeeper told me

all about it. She said that a great many years ago he had a little boy whose name was Willie, and that this little boy and his mother died; and one of this little fellow's pleasures was to sit in the window and feed the doves. And Mr. P. has never forgot it, and that is the reason he wanted me to do it, and I suppose that is why he always calls me Willie. So now it is one of my duties to feed the doves every day, and I begin to like to do it, because it pleases *him* so much, you know, — though I don't quite like to feel myself occupying another little boy's place. I've got over thinking the old gentleman crazy — unless he's a little *touched* (as the housekeeper says) about the boy whom he lost.

Sometimes he speaks as if I were that very Willie, and again he seems to think of me as what I am. But, Harry, I've found that he's got a real warm, kind heart, and I'm pretty sure I've got a big place in it; and if I'm not

mistaken he's getting less and less crusty every day, and more like other people. Wouldn't it be a good thing to do, if I could help make him so?

I'm not going to school till Spring, and am going to have a long vacation. I believe it would take me a year to look over one-half of the things which he has got stored in these great rooms. Oh! there are *such* sights! and *such* wonders! and all covered thick with dust! But I spoke about it the other day, and he said he would have 'em cleaned up.

Now, dear Harry, when *are* you coming to see me? Your picture is not enough to look at, and I want to see you. But if you can't come till vacation, we'll have the old house looking all the better for you! — and he said— (I mean Mr. Pendleton,—it don't come quite right to call him father, though I do sometimes —it pleases him so) that you were to stay a month or two. So come prepared. Now I

haven't said one-half that I was going to, but this sheet of paper is giving out. But I want to tell you this: I'm *so* thankful every day of my life that I didn't keep that cup and sell it! What kept me from it, — God?

Now I got all over my home-sickness long ago, and am just as happy and contented as you are. The bank-note in this letter I want you to give to Jumper, and tell him how well off I am. He was drunk that day — poor fellow — and I can forgive him those words.

How is the Captain? The other half of what I was to tell you I'll put in my next.

Now don't forget to write soon and long to

JOE.

As Joe has neglected to add a post-script, we will supply the omission with this:

As week after week went past, Mr. Pendleton began to lose the crustiness which had grown nearly over his heart, and the warm,

healthful influence which Joe's ways exerted upon him brought him at length from behind the screen of reserve and coldness with which he had sheltered himself, into the brightness and sunlight of love and geniality. And as with the boy's presence came sunlight and cleanliness and order into the old man's treasure-house, — so into the treasure-house of his heart came warmth and love to brighten and beautify everything, and transform him to a genial, cheerful old man, with a heart younger than his body. And so, you see, the Cup was the means of bringing him that which was worth ten thousand times more than itself — Something to love, and something to be loved by.

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